Changing the Subject *The Editors*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts—June 2, 1973, 50 cents

The Puzzling Prosecution

Walter Pincus

Nixon's Limited Confession

John Osborne

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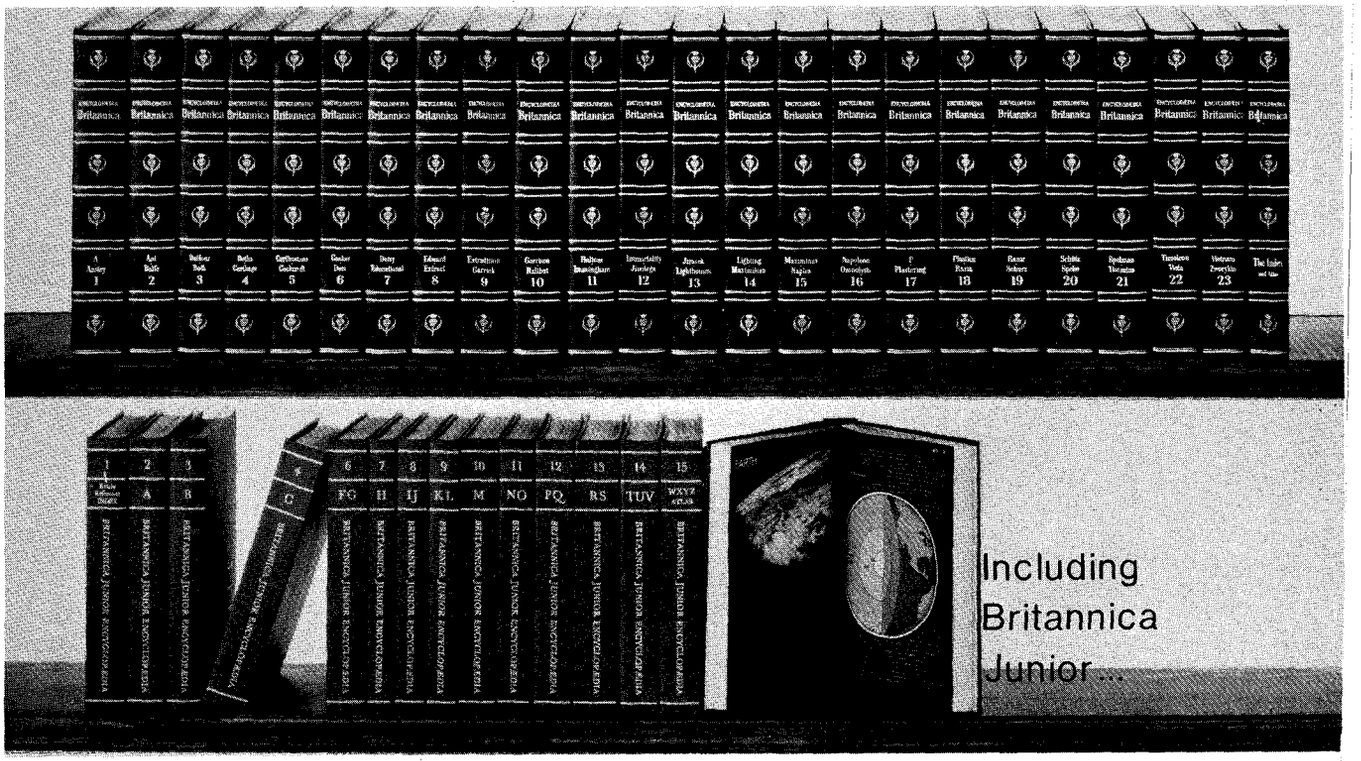

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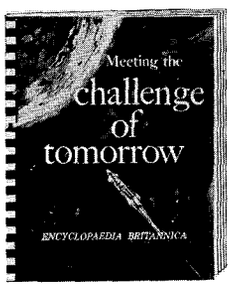

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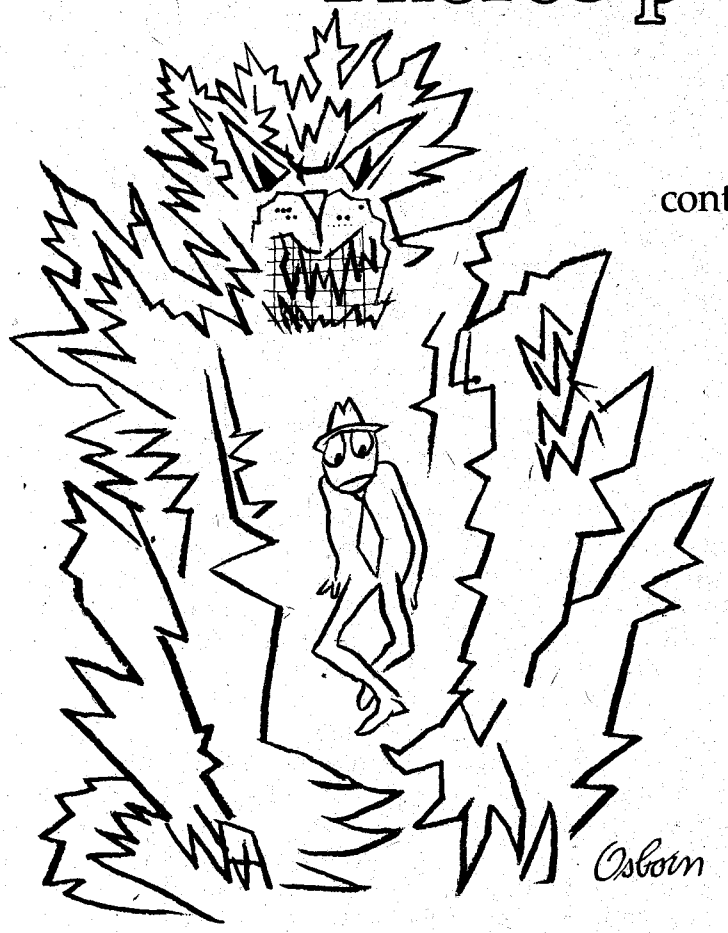

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from Washington
June 2, 1973

Letter To Pat Moynihan

Dear Mr. Ambassador

Forgive the impudence of this letter, your excellency, but I have just come from the White House and to save my sanity I have to think something cheerful. I dream of you way over there in New Delhi in the spacious embassy, nominated last December, and about the one man of the Nixon crew who escaped from it all in time, with honor.

You were the token Irishman in 1969 and Henry Kissinger was the token Jew, and now even poor Henry is smirched. Under the paranoia of the White House he allowed the telephones of his own subordinates to be tapped for security reasons, no doubt rationalizing that when you live with madmen you have to yield to their ways for the larger good.

Could you, Pat, as a self-made sociologist, from a coldwater flat in Harlem, work for a boss who tapped your telephone or those of your subordinates? Of course not. You were in this crowd of hardfaced, white, Protestant, predominantly rich, Anglo-Saxons and I still remember one press conference, in July 1969. You wore a lemon cream-colored velvet sport coat with pearl buttons, and the rest of you in black pants and black suede shoes. You were terrific, and the ideas you brought with you to the nonplussed Nixon team were just as startling to that stuffy crew. Why, in those halcyon days you almost persuaded the President he was another Disraeli, throwing goodies to the grateful masses in the form of guaranteed incomes and family allowances.

I have read your book, Pat, *The Politics of a Guaranteed Income*, in which you loyally defend the administration even while the boss backed further and further away from the poor and the friendless. You were the assistant to the President for urban affairs, and the showcase liberal but long before you escaped I guess you saw that you had lost out. The square-jawed foes of rotten liberalism had taken over.

So where are they now? Wally Hickel left the Cabinet when he couldn't get past the Haldeman-Ehrlichman stone wall. Haldeman-Ehrlichman are out. Your old colleague the attorney general, along with ex-Commerce Secretary Stans are under indictment. Romney, of course, quit or was fired (he had an independent streak, you know), and Bill Rogers still lives in the pale half-light of being secretary of State without being secretary of State.

I won't go through the list. Arthur Burns did get out in time, like you, and is over at the Federal Reserve Board where he now has the awful job of putting on the anti-inflation, tight-money brakes to try to rescue the economy from a third devaluation of the dollar under the doctrinaire mismanagement of free-market ideologues, George Shultz and Herb Stein. But why blame them? The President followed the old political route: don't raise taxes and boast about it; accept three thumping deficits in a row, and end up in a boom-bust cycle with rousing inflation. This is the kind of thing that generally happens in a "business" administration.

But I didn't mean to get off on that, Pat. It's about the country. I have written this column for 27 years (I think) but this is the saddest period I have ever known. When I came to Washington as a young reporter, I saw the stricken Hoover trying to outface the Depression. That was sad, but not as bad as this, I think. Hoover wasn't ignoble. He was overcome by forces that he didn't understand, and he had some of the pathos of a figure in a Greek tragedy. Stay over in New Delhi, Mr. Ambassador; keep away from us!

I spent a morning last week at the Ervin committee where the issue between two Watergate witnesses was not over whether there had been an attempt at cover-up, but over whether it could be traced right up to Mr. Nixon. Senators sat appalled.

I spent the afternoon at the White House press room where three staff members at a briefing tried to explain one of the sorriest presidential documents—maybe *the* sorriest presidential document of modern times. We didn't see the President. Ron Ziegler keeps promising a press conference in "the near future" but if it comes it will be grim. How can a President be asked if he is going to resign? The Ziegler briefing with acting White House counsel Leonard Garment was a scene of almost jungle savagery. The disingenuous statement cried for examination.

This was different from Mr. Nixon's April 30 televised Watergate explanation with the bust of Lincoln. A black-tie group of guests at a new exhibit at the Smithsonian watched it. There was a stir when he called Bob Haldeman and John Ehrlichman "two of the finest public servants it has been my privilege to know." But there was an audible titter when he said it would be "cowardly" to blame subordinates. In a word, the speech didn't wash.

And now here is this much sadder affair, the President virtually admitting many of the dark charges just now surfacing in the Watergate inquiry. Yes there have been wiretaps: "I authorized this entire program . . . legal at the time . . ." (Legal, of course, because the Supreme Court hadn't yet slapped down the monstrous contention of Attorney General Mitchell that he could wiretap at will—without court order—in domestic cases.) There was the Nixon admission that he had countenanced a program "for surreptitious entry—breaking and entering," which was never put into effect, however, apparently because J. Edgar Hoover wouldn't agree. What a choice of marvels: Hoover vetoing a President, or a President prepared to compound a felony. There was the revelation, forced out by Watergate, that the White House ran its own private secret surveillance team, the Special Investigation Unit from which two members graduated into Watergate.

Above all, the President pleaded ignorance. That was his excuse; he didn't know what was going on. Watergate forced this choice: complicity or incompetency and he picked the latter. Mr. Nixon was "advised" that the CIA might be involved in Watergate; did he hit the roof?—no, by his own account he tried to divert investigation from the subject. And all the time he sheltered behind "national security," the new alibi, and his own ignorance.

Sad words, eh, Mr. Ambassador? You once said "You're not Irish if you don't know your heart's meant to be broken." Better keep away from us. New Delhi looks awfully good from here.

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Changing The Subject

Today's text is taken from an early gospel according to Richard Nixon, delivered years before John Mitchell was said to have intervened with the Securities and Exchange Commission in behalf of Robert L. Vesco, the donor in secret and in cash of $200,000 for the reelection of the President in 1972. "When the national chairman of the party in power intervenes in behalf of a client," said Mr. Nixon in 1951, "such action is influence itself, regardless of whether he goes further and advocates the merits of the case. . . . The top officials of both parties should set an example of propriety and ethics which goes beyond the strict legal minimum required by law." President Truman had disgraced the White House by "condoning unethical practices by members of his own official family," practices which had done "more than anything else to encourage the decline of morality among government employees."

That was long ago as political time is measured. And here we are and here is President Nixon and here is another crisis. What can he do with those words except eat them? He could try to forget them, granting himself an amnesty denied to the Vietnam generation. Or he could change the subject, which is what he did on Tuesday of last week, and what he has done often since 1945, when he answered a want-ad placed by GOP businessmen, bankers and party leaders in the 12th District of California.

They wanted a "congressman candidate with no previous experience to defeat a man who has represented the district in the House for 10 years." The navy veteran who answered their ad quickly proved that he needed no previous experience. He was a prodigy in the art of changing the subject. His Democratic opponent in 1946, Rep. Jerry Voorhis, had been rated by Washington newsmen first in integrity among the 435 members of the House. Voorhis was diligent, progressive, independent. He had rejected endorsement by the Political Action Committee. He was on the House Un-American Activities Committee! Nevertheless, he had to answer the charge that "A vote for Nixon is a vote against the PAC, its Communist principles, and its gigantic slush fund." That became the subject of Nixon's first campaign, not Voorhis' record on trade legislation or school lunches or the poll tax. Nixon won by 15,000 votes.

When he ran for the Senate against Helen Gahagan Douglas, the

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aim was surer and deadly. At the start Mrs. Douglas foolishly debated as if the subject were the rural and urban problems of California. It was not. It was the lady's "socialist baloney" and the number of times she had voted the same way as "the notorious party-liner, Vito Marcantonio of New York." She lost by 680,947 votes. Later still, when Senator Nixon as the Republicans' vice presidential candidate was damaged by news of a secret fund put at his disposal by business friends, the accusing finger was pointed away from the accusation and toward crooks and Communists. Here is what Nixon said on September 19, 1952:

> I want you folks to know something. I'm going to reveal it today for the first time. After I received the nomination for the Vice Presidency, I was warned that if I continued to attack the Communists and crooks in this Administration, they would smear me, and believe me, you can expect that they will continue to do so. They started it yesterday. They said I had taken money—$16,000. What they didn't point out was this: what I was doing was saving you money. The expenses of my office were in excess of the amounts allowed under the law. Rather than using the taxpayers' money for these expenses, what did I do? . . . What would you have had me do? I'll tell you what some of them do. They put their wives on the payroll. That's what Sparkman did. I don't believe in putting my wife on the payroll, and taking your money and using it for that purpose. I think most of you will agree on that. Pat Nixon has worked in my office night after night, and I can say this and say it proudly, she has never been on the government payroll since I have been in Washington. Would you want me to do what some people are doing? Take fat legal fees on the side? During the time I have been in Washington, I have never taken a legal fee, although as a lawyer I could legally but not ethically have done so. And I'm never going to do so in the future because I think that's a violation of trust which my office has. You can be sure that the smears will continue to come, and the purpose of these smears is to make me, if possible, relent in my attacks on the Communists and the crooks in the present Administration. As far as I am concerned, they've got another guess coming. What I intend to do is go up and down this land, and the more they smear me the more I'm going to expose the Communists and the crooks and those who defend them until they throw them all out of Washington.

The Eisenhower-Nixon ticket won that year by 6,621,260 votes.

Seventeen months later, warming up for the mid-term campaign of 1954, Mr. Nixon laid down this political axiom: "You should fight the battle on the ground on which you are strongest; avoid the tactical error of fighting on your opponent's strongest ground. Whenever anybody attacks, the way to answer is not simply to defend but to take the offensive." Returning to that axiom in his lengthy statement last week about Watergate and sundry matters, he raised more questions than he answered, but as his memory is jogged by further testimony we can look forward to further pronouncements.

John Osborne elsewhere in this issue comments on the background and substance of that statement. We limit ourselves here to the observation that Mr. Nixon, as in other crises, sets out to divert. The public is invited to view alleged crimes and improprieties by his staff and his Republican friends from the broader perspective of presidential responsibility for protecting the national security. If on this occasion the Nixon "offensive" bogs down, the failure stems primarily from circumstances beyond his control. It is not only that a handful of crooks who worked for his reelection were caught and convicted, and that justice was obstructed by the White House itself, but that there is no end of the crookedness in sight. White House credibility has leaked away at a score of puncture points. The President can no longer protect his closest associates: they are being shot down all around him. Nor can they any longer shield him from the shock waves. Fourteen members of his team have already resigned. How, then, could his repeated claim of ignorance of wrongdoing, coupled with a willingness to take responsibility for he knows not what, be persuasive? What "offensive" was there for him to take? He cannot impugn a bipartisan Senate committee of investigation. He cannot derogate that venerable institution the grand jury, or question the credentials of a new prosecutor selected by his own attorney general. He could have tried to fall back on a more congenial line of defense—some foreign peril, some new Communist threat which summons us to stand behind the commander-in-chief. He denied himself that tactic last week. He had to, not only because Mr. Brezhnev is soon to visit Washington, but because if he were to play this oldest trick of the Old Nixon, he would in effect begin to dismantle the New Nixon's only monument to glory—peace and trade with Moscow and Peking.

And so he spoke on May 22 of his duty to guard the national security. That duty, we were told, included a duty to protect the Central Intelligence Agency from disclosures that it was engaged in operations from which it is barred by law; operations which the CIA had informed the White House it had *not* engaged in. Somehow, somewhere in some mysterious and unspecified ways, the national security led him to authorize or countenance, or remain innocent of—lying to the FBI, burglarizing Watergate, breaking into the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist, spying on Democrats, soliciting contributions in cash and spending that money clandestinely on political espionage, faking political literature to embarrass Democrats, and putting pressure on defendants to keep silent.

The national security has been badly damaged, with the connivance of the White House, and it ill behooves the President to dangle it before us now as justification, explanation or apology for the dirty work that was done to help him win reelection.

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The Ervin Hearings

The drama in the first days of the Ervin Select Senate Committee public hearings came from the witnesses and not the senators or the two committee counsels. In that regard, the hearings differ from past major congressional investigations, but the difference may be just what is needed when the subject matter is nothing less than a wide-ranging campaign of espionage and sabotage to fix a presidential election. It was Watergate conspirator James W. McCord, Jr.'s, written statements, read in a soft reflective monotone, that laid out both an alleged attempt to put blame for the Watergate break-in and bugging on CIA and the more dramatic effort to get him to remain silent, be convicted and serve a short term with a promise of executive clemency. Then it was John J. Caulfield, former New York cop, White House investigative aide and Treasury official who confirmed in major part McCord's story on the offer of executive clemency. Then in a carefully performed presentation Gerald Alch, McCord's former counsel, sought to cut down both McCord and his new counsel Bernard Fensterwald, challenging the allegation that he, Alch, had proposed a CIA defense or was aware executive clemency was being offered during the Watergate trial.

Congressional investigative hearings take on a life of their own and may get out of hand if not closely controlled by the committee chairman and chief counsel. The decision to postpone a McCord-Fensterwald appearance to answer Alch shows a determination, from the start, not to be sidetracked. Senator Baker's pressing for additional witnesses at a future date indicates that attempts will be made to resolve testimonial conflicts in a reasonable manner. It is still too early to judge how the Ervin committee will handle the pressures that will rise when the going gets tougher—when strong witnesses such as Caulfield and McCord are replaced by uncooperative or evasive ones. At that point, questions may be raised about the original decisions by Ervin and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield to load the Democratic side of the panel with colorless, go-along types such as Joseph Montoya of New Mexico, Herman Talmadge of Georgia and, to a slightly lesser degree, Daniel Inouye of Hawaii. In the early days it has been unimportant that these three showed, by their questioning, little independent preparation. One senator did not even know that convicted Watergate conspirator Bernard Barker had been tried and found guilty. Another confined most of his questions to old, outdated news stories. A third concerned himself with the job descriptions of the witnesses.

The Republicans appear to be readier to confront the tougher days ahead. If one senator has outperformed the others it is Howard Baker of Tennessee. He looks good, is well prepared, follows up answers with questions based on the response, not just the next question on the next card prepared by a staff member. Edward Gurney appears to have taken on the difficult job of Protector of the Palace. It's a difficult role to play since much of what he sought to attack had earlier been confirmed as true—albeit outside the hearing room. For example it was ludicrous to make the point that McCord only had hearsay evidence on John Mitchell's attendance at meetings where the Watergate bugging was discussed. Mitchell himself has admitted being at such meetings. Lowell Weicker of Connecticut brought out and developed the passing of FBI reports to the Nixon committee by the internal security division of the Justice Department.

The tone and direction of the hearing is set essentially by committee chairman Sam Ervin and his counsel Samuel Dash. They have adopted a careful, low-key approach. Ervin, himself, has done little questioning. Dash is deceptive. He permitted some key points to be passed over during early testimony, yet his soft-spoken cross-examination of Alch drew forth facts that supported McCord and to a degree undermined Alch. Minority Counsel Fred Thompson, who shares first round questioning with Dash, has missed the mark more often than hitting it. He sought to impeach McCord's motives for disclosure and twice pushed the possibility of whether Alfred C. Baldwin III, McCord's man who listened and recorded bugged telephone conversations, was a double agent planted

"I liked last year's landslide better."

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by the Democrats. But when the opportunity came to promote Alch's contention that McCord's lawyer was "out to get the President," Thompson shied away and instead picked up Dash's attack on Alch.

The initial pace of hearings and the ever-widening scope of the investigation assure their continuation well into the summer. The original plan was to devote the opening segment to the break-in, bugging and cover-up. Already three extra hearing days have been added for that. In addition, the committee will now explore the disclosure by Caulfield that one of his jobs for Nixon aide John Ehrlichman was to provide "investigative support for the White House," using another former New York policeman who "was paid on a monthly basis" by the law firm of Nixon's personal lawyer, Herbert Kalmbach. Both Caulfield and his assistant have been asked to appear before the committee later. They have supplied a list of investigations performed for Mr. Ehrlichman.

Future blocks of hearings will also be devoted to the national political espionage and sabotage campaign against Democratic candidates, and to the manner and method by which campaign funds were gathered for the Nixon reelection effort. The President noted in his May 22 statement, "with respect to campaign practices, and also with respect to campaign finances, it should now be obvious that no campaign in history has ever been subjected to the kind of searching inquiry that has been focussed on the campaign waged on my behalf in 1972." It may be the most truthful section of that 4000 word statement. It also points the Ervin committee beyond the Watergate.

Neither Agnew nor Albert

According to such unimpeachable sources as Ron Ziegler and Julie Nixon Eisenhower, President Nixon has no intention of quitting his job. "When the going gets rough," said Mrs. Eisenhower of her father, "I don't think he'd ever bug out, so to speak." Nevertheless, the talk persists. European gold hoarders are said to be motivated by rumors that Mr. Nixon will resign. Stewart Alsop and James J. Kilpatrick agree that if it is proved that Richard Nixon knew who was responsible for the Watergate burglary and participated in the cover-up he should quit or be removed. Rep. John E. Moss of California and Rep. Bella Abzug of New York favor a House inquiry into whether grounds exist to impeach the President. The House, Moss thinks, should be ready to act in case the unthinkable becomes necessary. Until two weeks ago the bulk of Moss' mail came from persons urging impeachment; lately the most frequent suggestion is that Nixon should voluntarily step aside.

The Ervin Select Committee has miles to go before it refutes or confirms the President's claim of ignorance. As the senators repeat on the hour, they have been given no proof of Nixon's complicity in Watergate or its cover-up, and hence no grounds for impeachment proceedings. But what if that situation changes?

While it is not pertinent to the case of Nixon's fitness to continue, it is sobering to note that he would, in the ordinary course of events, be succeeded by Spiro Agnew or, in the event of the Vice President's unavailability, by Speaker Carl Albert of the House. However, there is an alternative, though perhaps a farfetched one. The President could resign without either Agnew or Albert becoming President. Under the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified on February 10, 1967, a new procedure for presidential succession was established. The amendment was intended to make possible the selection of a new Vice President when the incumbent has succeeded to the presidency as Lyndon Johnson did on the death of John Kennedy. Under the amendment, when there is a vacancy in the vice presidency, the President appoints a new Vice President subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the House and Senate. If Agnew were to resign, Nixon could appoint a new Vice President. And if Nixon then resigned, the new man—agreeable to a majority of Congress—would take over. Were Nixon and Agnew both to resign simultaneously, President Carl Albert could if he chose, select a new Vice President and resign in his favor.

The nation would no doubt be severely shaken by a scandal-precipitated vacancy in the White House. And Spiro Agnew is not the statesman one would expect to be the Great Unifier. The point is that it is technically constitutionally possible to arrange for leadership by a man untainted by scandal or association with the implicated, a leader acceptable to Republicans and Democrats in Congress and qualified to assume the nation's highest office.

Academic Business

A few years ago, term paper shops began popping up in university towns. Graduate students and failed writers did most of the research and writing—often for wages a *bracero* might refuse. Some of the entrepreneurs were simply junior business tycoons getting their hands dirty before going on to larger challenges; others no doubt saw themselves as guerrillas engaged in destroying "the system." When a new batch of term papers hit the campus, the grapevine quickly spread the word. ("Say friend, want to buy a 20-pager on Aristotle's concept of the tragic hero as it relates to Macbeth, King Lear and H. R. Haldeman?") As sales increased, more capital was ventured. Extensive catalogs of available papers were compiled on a nation-

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wide basis, and items not on hand were special-ordered by mail. Is computerized inventory and invoice control the next step?

Unable to win the fight in the classroom, the university is fighting in court. The Postal Service has also been drawn in and in a test case has brought suit against four term paper factories under mail fraud statutes.

The first round of the United States of America and United States Postal Service *v.* International Term Papers, Inc., *et al.*, went to the companies. The government appealed, and on May 3 the US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit vacated the judgment and remanded the case to the federal district court for Massachusetts for further proceedings. Although it is the student, not the term paper dealer, who is defrauding the university, "the reality is that the appellees receive money through the mail by means of assisting students to make false representations to universities," wrote Chief Judge Frank Coffin, former Democratic congressman from Maine. Though a student's purchase of a term paper may be legal, "the intent of the seller, in the sense of his knowing cooperation in a scheme, is, by the words of the statute, a necessary prerequisite, for injunctive remedy [*i.e.*, detaining the companies' incoming mail]." That prerequisite, he ruled, is "obviously present in this case."

Small Business, Big Money

The cost overruns on the multibillion-dollar defense contracts held by corporate giants such as Lockheed, Litton and Grumman have been staple news items. But small and medium-sized defense contractors have been making huge profits at public expense too. Every year the Department of Defense awards procurement contracts worth $10,000 or more to some 20,000 business firms. The items purchased range from ammunition and bomb fuses to bed linen and floor wax for the barracks.

To protect the government from industrial profiteering, Congress in 1951 established the Renegotiation Board to obtain refunds from companies that make excessive profits on defense contracts. Since then, according to a recent report by the General Accounting Office, the board has "made excessive profit determinations of over $1.1 billion before deduction of credits for federal income and excess profits taxes. The net amount of those determinations after deductions totaled $468 million." Not all defense contracts are subject to renegotiation, however. The act exempts 16 categories of sales (*e.g.*, contracts with state or local agencies and those for raw materials or public utilities). Firms whose defense and space business does not exceed $1 million a year or whose profits are less than $80,000 are exempt. "About one-third of defense procurement sales from 1961 to 1970 were not subject to renegotiation," the GAO notes. "The estimated amount of sales not renegotiated ranged from almost $12 billion in 1964 to almost $30 billion in 1969." Of those sales which were not exempt, however, relatively few were actually renegotiated.

A contractor whose renegotiable sales are greater than $1 million must file a report with the board. If an initial review satisfies the board that the company has not made excessive profits, a clearance notice is issued.

If, on the other hand, there is a "reasonable possibility" that excessive profits have been made, the report is assigned (usually on a geographical basis) to either the Washington, DC, or Los Angeles regional board which "analyzes the contractor's accounting system and the method used in allocating costs and expenses between renegotiable and nonrenegotiable business, to determine the amount, if any, of excessive profits." If less than $80,000, board policy is not to seek a refund because the "small business contractor . . . can least afford the time and expense involved in prolonged renegotiation proceedings." In cases where the board and the contractor cannot agree to a settlement, the board issues a unilateral order specifying the amount of excessive profits that must be refunded. The company may contest the order by filing a petition with the Court of Claims within 90 days. About three-fourths of all such orders are contested, and, in the two years it has had jurisdiction, the Court of Claims has upheld 54 percent of the amount of these determinations. By contrast, the Tax Court, which had jurisdiction until 1971, had upheld 89 percent of the determinations.

On its face the renegotiation procedure appears reasonable; in practice it is full of absurdities. During the past five years the board has averaged about 5000 filings a year. From information supplied by the Internal Revenue Service for the years 1970 through 1972, the board found about 100 contractors who should have filed but did not. In addition, as of last September, the board was checking another 700 contractors who "might have been required to file." Tracking down possibly delinquent companies wastes an inordinate amount of the board's time: there are 223 board employees and over 20,000 defense contractors. Unlike tax returns that are automatically subject to IRS penalty if filed late, there are *no* penalties for late reports to the board. In 1972, almost half (48 percent) of the refund determinations involved delinquent filings, and two contractors who owed the government $219,000 in refunds were almost five years late in filing. GAO estimates that for 1972 alone, "the Government would have recovered about $450,000 in interest, computed at an annual rate of 4 percent, if late filers had been charged interest on the excessive profits held for the time the filings were late." Although the act provides for a $10,000 fine or as much as one year's imprisonment for willful failure or refusal to furnish

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information to the board or for knowingly giving it false or misleading information, only one contractor has ever been indicted, and, notes GAO, "the fine was not imposed because of the impact it would have had on the community where the contractor was located." The stumbling block is "the need to prove that contractors willfully failed to file or furnish required data. The Board and the Department of Justice have apparently found it too difficult and time consuming to prove willful intent and seem to have abandoned these efforts."

The act and subsequent amendments specified items (such as net worth, capital employed and risk) which the board must consider in renegotiation, but left it free to establish its own procedures. Instead of writing guidelines to assign relative weights to the statutory factors, however, the board has taken a rather free form approach to each contractor's case. (Perhaps in anticipation of GAO criticism on this point, board chairman Richard T. Burress wrote GAO that the board had set in motion reforms that will "greatly facilitate an early development of written guidelines now found lacking in the renegotiation process.") This absence of guidelines, notes GAO, has resulted in board determinations that have "left contractors with remarkably consistent returns on sales but wide-ranging returns on capital. A regional board official stated that it is a rule of thumb to leave a sales return of less than 10 percent to large contractors and between 10 and 14 percent to small contractors. We found no similar rules of thumb for returns on capital employed."

Contractors prefer to have their profits measured against sales because that tends to be a relatively modest figure whereas the return on net worth or capital employed can be astronomical. Yet these latter figures are often more relevant in determining excessive profits, because they reveal the extent to which a company is being propped up by defense dollars. On May 15, Sen. William Proxmire (D, Wisc.) released a three-page list of defense contractors who returned excessive profits to the government last year. Even after their refunds were deducted, they still enjoyed very high rates of return: "Of the 131 firms named, the after-refund profits of 94 exceeded 50 percent of net worth; 49 made over 100 percent; 22 made over 200 percent; and 4 defense contractors made over 500 percent profit on net worth. Only 4 contractors on the list made returns on net worth below 25 percent." (Note: The number of refunds cited by Proxmire, 173, exceeds the number of firms, 131, because some companies made refunds for more than one year but did not pay them until 1972.) By comparison, Proxmire said, "federal statistics show that average profits on stockholders' equity (a measure that closely approximates net worth) for all manufacturing firms range from 18 percent to 20 percent annually."

The largest refund last year was $8,900,000 from National Union Electric Corporation, but with two exceptions (Teledyne and Norris Industries) none of the refunding companies was among the Pentagon's top 100 defense contractors. One reason for the absence of the large firms, says Proxmire, is that "excessive profits are determined on the basis of a contractor's entire defense business for each year, rather than for individual contracts. A company's entire annual defense business is averaged and considered as a whole so that losses or low profits on some contracts offset high profits on others." GAO points out that this consolidation is particularly advantageous for a conglomerate "since it can offset the high profits of certain divisions or subsidiaries by the losses or lower profits of other divisions or subsidiaries."

The Renegotiation Board will die on June 30 unless Congress extends it. (It generally has been extended every two years.) Without the board, the government would have an even more difficult time trying to recoup excessive profits on defense contracts. But the board has not been as effective as it ought to be, and as the minimum price for its extension Congress should require it to formulate firm and realistic guidelines measuring excessive profits. Congress should tighten the law so the burden of filing reports will no longer rest with the board. Enacting automatic penalties for late or erroneous reports—similar to those for delinquent income tax reports, for example—would put the burden of filing where it belongs: on the defense contractor.

Gas Up

With the change of seasons we have a change of crisis the heating oil shortage has given way to the gasoline shortage. Like its predecessor last winter, the gas shortage was predictable; it was anticipated by the major oil refiners as early as February. As they continue to say in self-defense, they have committed their refineries to maximum production—previously o heating oil, now gasoline. The Office of Emergency Preparedness says that gasoline production is running at about 90 percent of capacity. Yet there is not enough to go around. The OEP says more than 500 gas stations have shut down because of the drought, most of them independently owned; and now five major oil companies (Gulf, Phillips, American, Sun and Union) have been forced to cut back distribution to their own dealers. Farmers in the Midwest say they can't get gasoline at the usual price—or at any price in some cases—which means they must pay more to run irrigation pumps, tractors and other equipment. The cost of food will rise accordingly. Many cities, including Washington, DC and New York, are finding that they can't buy

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Watergate defendants with funds. At no time did I attempt, or did I authorize others to attempt, to implicate the CIA in the Watergate matter. It was not until the time of my own investigation that I learned of the breakin at the office of Mr. [Daniel] Ellsberg's psychiatrist, and I specifically authorized the furnishing of this information to Judge Byrne. I neither authorized nor encouraged subordinates to engage in illegal or improper campaign tactics." It is upon the validity of these denials, and upon the credibility of testimony likely to bring some if not all of them into question, that Mr. Nixon must stand or fall.

Mr. Nixon confessed to several things that he has previously denied or, stating the point in the gentlest possible way, previously concealed. He confessed that he instituted in 1969 a series of domestic surveillance procedures, varying from wiretapping to felonious physical intrusion upon property and privacy, that were put to illegal and improper political uses before and during his 1972 campaign for reelection. He confessed that he ordered senior White House assistants, his attorney general and the directors of various intelligence services to restrict investigation of the Watergate bugging and burglary that set off the sequence of disastrous disclosures last June. His excuse—the central point of his defense—is that he demanded restriction but not a cover-up in order to protect intelligence procedures that he considers vital to national security. Whatever wrong was done in this cause, including the illegal dragging of the Central Intelligence Agency into domestic surveillance, he attributed to zealous officials who variously misunderstood him and his orders, concealed much of what they were doing from him, and continually reassured him that nobody in his White House establishment was doing or had done anything wrong. He got closest to genuine confession in the ordinary meaning of the word when he said: "With hindsight, it is apparent that I should have given more heed to the warning signals I received along the way about a Watergate coverup and less to the reassurances." The weakness of his account leaped from a betraying phrase in a reference to his 1972 campaign. "It is clear," he said, "that unethical as well as illegal activities took place in the course of that campaign. None of these took place with my specific knowledge or approval." A President who was as innocent of knowledge and involvement as Mr. Nixon claimed to be would not have had to have his lawyers and drafters write that none of it took place with his *specific* knowledge and approval.

John Osborne

More Unanswered Watergate Questions

The Puzzling Prosecution

by Walter Pincus

Within hours of the arrest of five men inside Democratic national headquarters in the Watergate building, ast June 17, agents of the Justice Department—the ocal US attorney's office in Washington, DC and the ıssistant attorney general of the Criminal Division—ook charge of the case. Four individuals were in-olved: Assistant Attorney General Henry E. Petersen, ınd Assistant US Attorneys Earl Silbert, Seymour Glanzer and Donald Campbell. Of the four, two had ies to main participants in the matter. Petersen, a areer Justice official, had been plucked from the ›ureaucracy by John Mitchell, a man he admired, and ;iven the presidential appointment as head of the riminal division. Silbert, who worked for years in the JS attorney's office, had during 1969 been dispatched o the Justice Department to help draw up the DC crime bill. There he dealt not only with Mitchell but also with John Wesley Dean III, then a Mitchell deputy in charge of Justice's congressional relations. For almost a year, these four, along with Attorney General Richard Kleindienst and former acting FBI Director L. Patrick Gray III, exercised primary responsibility for the investigation and prosecutions, not only of those involved in the Watergate burglary and bugging, but of the financing and carrying out of the Nixon campaign organization's widespread political espionage and sabotage. Since March 21, when convicted Watergate conspirator James McCord, Jr., sent a letter to Judge John Sirica alleging political pressures to cover up the original crime, the prosecutors also have been investigating that side of the sordid affair.

From the start, the prosecutors have been the sub-

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ject of speculation—speculation over whether they could get to the higher-ups who ordered and directed the crime, but who also were *their* bosses; speculation over whether they, the prosecutors, would be subject to political pressures. This concern was expressed during the first Watergate trial by Judge Sirica, who on several occasions interrupted the prosecutors to press questions of his own, seeking to dig out information that seemed to be ignored by the government lawyers.

Now it appears the prosecutors themselves are under investigation by the Ervin Select Senate Committee. And the appointment of a special supervisory government prosecutor, Archibald Cox, makes it likely that still another review of their work will be made. Though hindsight simplifies what may have been obscure at the time, a number of questions are worth asking in assessing the prosecutorial effort to date.

Who narrowed the scope of the original investigation and why?

In a June 19, 1972 summary, the FBI said it was investigating "whether there is a violation of the Interception of Communications Statutes or any other Federal statutes." In another FBI investigative summary little more than one month later, prepared at the request of White House counsel, John Wesley Dean III, and delivered to him through the attorney general, the "direction of investigation" was limited to possible violations of the wiretap statute, although by then information had been developed indicating possible violations of campaign fund laws and fraud statutes. Justice Department spokesman John W. Hushens said recently that Attorney General Kleindienst joined with Assistant Attorney General Petersen in making that "policy" decision within weeks after the break-in. White House aides John Ehrlichman and H. R. Haldeman were by then actively intervening in the case in an attempt to get the CIA to limit FBI investigation of Watergate funds, claiming—erroneously—that clandestine activities would be endangered. However, Hushens says the prosecutors were not to his knowledge influenced in their decision by the White House.

On July 10, 1972, FBI agents in Mexico City were told that a $100,000 contribution destined for Maurice Stans, finance chairman of the Nixon reelection campaign, had come from the account of an "American company with operations in Mexico." Federal law prohibits corporations from contributing to presidential elections; yet this alleged violation was not initially pursued by the FBI, according to Mr. Gray, because the assistant US attorney did not request such an inquiry. Recently a federal grand jury in Houston has begun an investigation of Gulf Resources and Development Corp., from whose account the funds initially came.

Telephone records and bank accounts from August 1971 to June 1972 of Donald J. Segretti, an alleged campaign saboteur hired by the Nixon organization, were examined last fall by the FBI at the direction of the US attorney, but no prosecution was immediately brought. Instead, according to Mr. Gray, "there was never any indication from either the assistant attorney general or the US attorney that there was any likelihood of prosecution of Mr. Segretti." Recently an

"Now you know why I never watch TV—all they give us is crime programs!"

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indictment has been brought against Segretti in Florida and investigations of his activities are reportedly underway in several other states.

Why was the Watergate prosecution so slow in coming to trial?

According to former Acting FBI Director Gray, the main part of the investigation was over by mid-July last year. Gray's successor, William Ruckelshaus and other FBI sources reportedly agree that indictments could have been obtained in late July rather than in mid-September, a date that guaranteed no trial would take place until well after the election.

Was the delay in any way part of a cover-up?

Despite statements that the FBI investigation was the "most thorough since the Kennedy assassination," as alleged by Attorney General Kleindienst during his campaign appearances last fall, there is ample evidence the inquiry was hesitant when it approached the White House and the reelection committee.

It was five days after the crime before an arrangement could be agreed upon for FBI interviews with White House staff members. White House counsel Dean was permitted to sit in. The contents of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt's safe, kept in Hunt's White House office, were withheld from the bureau for seven days. Then at least two folders were privately given Acting Director Gray with implied instructions from Dean and Ehrlichman to destroy them.

Assistant US Attorney Silbert agreed to permit reelection committee lawyers to sit in on all FBI interviews with campaign personnel, if they would not "interfere with the questioning." This arrangement continued despite the fact that, according to the FBI's July 21 report, at least some reelection committee employees secretly sought FBI reinterviews without committee lawyers present, and others advised agents they were being given the runaround by Nixon committee officials.

The then treasurer of the Nixon reelection effort, Hugh Sloan, Jr., was given unusual treatment by his Nixon committee colleagues and prosecutors alike. Sloan was troubled by those $100 bills in the hands of the Watergate burglars. He immediately tied the break-in to almost $200,000 in cash—mostly $100 bills—which he had given G. Gordon Liddy, a Nixon committee employee. Sloan had asked Finance Chairman Stans about these disbursements and had been told by Stans, after he checked with campaign chairman John Mitchell, that "you don't want to know" about them. On July 14 FBI agents questioned Stans about the Mexican money; he deferred to Sloan. The agents asked for Sloan; Stans told them "Sloan had resigned two weeks ago." But according to a later deposition by Sloan, he did *not* resign until later *that day*, after Stans told him what he had told the FBI.

Sloan then informed both the US attorneys and the grand jury that it had been suggested to him by Mitchell aide Fred LaRue that he, Sloan, take the Fifth Amendment on his disbursements of cash to Liddy. Deputy campaign director Jeb Magruder suggested that he perjure himself and report a smaller amount, $40,000. Alfred C. Baldwin III, the man who monitored some 200 telephone calls over the bugged Democratic phone, also says he was told to take the Fifth Amendment by Nixon committee lawyers. Nevertheless Baldwin on July 10, less than a month after the break-in, told his whole story to the US attorney and the FBI. With all the other defendants and suspects remaining silent, and neither of the two bugs in Democratic headquarters having yet been uncovered, Baldwin's was the first indication that a wiretap had actually been installed. His statement was important for another reason. He told the prosecutors of the participation of Hunt and Liddy. And he reported that on the night of the arrests, he had taken to McCord's home and given McCord's wife the receiver—over which he heard the conversations—and the walkie-talkies that he and Hunt had used that night.

McCord, at the time he was arrested, had at least one telephone electronic bug in his possession. During the week McCord was in jail, however, no search warrant was taken out for either his home or his business office. The prosecutors now say they had no reasonable cause to get one. Yet an FBI directive, sent to its Miami office on June 20, suggests a search warrant be obtained to examine McCord's Florida apartment. If investigators had searched McCord's home they would have found $18,800 in cash in his basement along with some $20,000 in bugging transmitters and receivers. When he was released from jail, McCord disposed of some of the equipment by burying it or throwing it in a sewer. Strangely enough, three months later—at the time of McCord's indictment—the prosecutors sought from him and got the receiver and walkie-talkies Baldwin had delivered to McCord's home the night of the arrest. Both McCord and the prosecutors are silent on why all this happened as it did, though it is said to have involved the threat of legal action against McCord's wife.

We don't know today why the prosecutors waited so long to get that material, nor why they didn't ask for any other material. It should be pointed out that around the same time, in September, the Democrats—contacted secretly by Baldwin—turned up the bug on the phone of Spencer Oliver, a party official. The appearance of that bug confirmed that an electronic interception had occurred and could have required the prosecutors to retrieve the receiver. The appearance of the bug preceded the Watergate indictment by about two weeks. There has been speculation that if the Democrats had not uncovered the Spencer Oliver bug, the indictment would have been only a conspiracy to intercept, rather than the carrying out of the act of wiretapping.

Did the prosecutors know of attempts to involve the CIA in the cover-up?

On June 23, 1972 White House aides Haldeman and

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Ehrlichman—aware even before the FBI that the Mexican checks would lead to the Watergate conspirators—sought to have bureau investigation of those checks blocked by the CIA. On July 6, CIA Deputy Director Lt. General Vernon Walters told Acting FBI Director Gray that there was no clandestine CIA connection with the Mexican money and that it appeared the White House was trying to involve CIA in a cover-up. Did Gray ever pass along that information to Assistant Attorney General Petersen or the US attorneys? Beginning in October 1972, and running through December 22, the Watergate prosecutors sought additional information on CIA assistance given Hunt and Liddy in July and August 1971, when both were working on a project that culminated in the September 3, 1971 burglary of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. A CIA official, who refuses to comment on the cover-up allegations, says these questions in late 1972 dealt mainly with proving there was no CIA involvement in the Watergate break-in. He attributes the special interest of the prosecutors in CIA to "rumors around the courthouse that some defendants would use CIA as a defense."

In his Senate committee testimony, James McCord alleges that it was suggested to him, at just this time on December 21, that he use "as my defense during the trial the story that the Watergate operation was a CIA operation." McCord says he refused to go along with what he termed "the White House . . . ploy," and thereafter, he testified, it was dropped.

What was the background of the press release by Assistant Attorney General Petersen on September 16, 1972?

Twenty-four hours earlier, on September 15, the indictments were brought in the Watergate case. The main defendants were Hunt and Liddy. Senator George McGovern, then the Democratic presidential candidate, called for additional investigation into who had paid for the operation. On September 16 McGovern termed the indictment a "whitewash." Later that day a press release emerged from the Justice Department under the name of Assistant Attorney General Henry C. Petersen (his middle initial is E.), stating that "Senator McGovern's charges are completely unfounded and are a grievous attack on the integrity of the 23 good citizens of the District of Columbia who served on the Watergate grand jury." It went on to say there had been no limits on the investigation "conducted under my supervision" and that it was "among the most exhaustive and far-reaching that I have seen in my 25 years in the department." Justice Department press officer Hushens says he worked the language of the statement out with Petersen that afternoon, while Petersen was attending his daughter's wedding. "We had the information ready to go," Hushens said recently, adding that he saw nothing wrong with a career bureaucrat answering the charge of a presidential candidate. "Petersen may have come up from the ranks but he was a Presidential appointee," he said. Hushens, it might be recalled, traveled with Attorney General Kleindienst when the latter performed as a surrogate in the Nixon campaign—with his expenses reimbursed by the Nixon reelection committee.

Why did the prosecutors accept so uncritically Magruder's questionable testimony?

As noted earlier, Hugh Sloan told the prosecutors and the grand jury that Magruder sought to have him testify falsely. Nevertheless the prosecution used Magruder as a key witness. It gave credence to Magruder's assertion that Liddy had been given a "legal" intelligence function, an assertion now known to be untrue. Prosecutor Silbert accepted Magruder's statement that in return for $150,000, Liddy had told him 250,000 demonstrators would show up at the Republican Convention in San Diego, and that that intelligence was critical to the decision to move the convention to Miami. McCord noted both in his Senate testimony and in reports filed with the Nixon reelection committee (and thus available to the prosecutors) that the demonstrator figures for San Diego were given McCord by the internal security division of Justice, and not to Liddy. It also should have been noted by the prosecutors that the GOP convention site was transferred primarily because of the ITT scandal (the alleged payment of $400,000 for the convention), and not anxiety about possible demonstrations.

Two other prosecution witnesses were in conflict on the same key cover-up promoted at the trial—the so-called need for a special intelligence unit run by Liddy. Robert Odle, the Nixon reelection committee's director of administration, testified that McCord was hired because he was plugged into investigative agencies such as the FBI, Justice Department, Secret Service and the Metropolitan Police; and indeed he did receive regular reports from those agencies. Herbert Porter, the reelection committee's director of scheduling, testified that the Liddy operation was necessary because the campaign organization was a private body and therefore could not receive reports from Justice, Secret Service, etc. Porter and Odle testified on the same day!

Perhaps the most damaging point concerning the prosecutors at the trial was a leading question put to Magruder, who was asked if he had ever told Liddy how to conduct his "legal" intelligence gathering. "We were very concerned about being sure that the activities of our committee were handled in a legal and ethical manner," Magruder replied. Under questioning he could not recall what prompted that statement to Liddy though he said it took place in a hallway.

What has been the prosecutors' attitude since the trial?

The prosecutors generally have been critical of the press, citing misleading facts and conclusions based on hearsay. Though they talked of searching for higher-ups after conviction of the original seven defendants, the assistant US attorneys stressed to newsmen that,

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as they had told the jury, Liddy was the boss. There were no superiors to find. During the pre-trial and post-trial period, they offered, on background, numerous theories as to what had happened; for example that Liddy was a zealot, operating on his own and out to make points with Nixon associates. At one time there was even a suggestion put forward that Liddy had stolen $16,000 to finance the operation. A lawyer for Democratic National Committee employees who were wiretapped says chief prosecutor Silbert told him that Hunt was doing the bugging for blackmail, not for political reasons at all. In their summary the prosecutors alleged that McCord was in it for the money—and in trying to prove that they conveniently left out the fact that McCord had a tax free $12,000 a year CIA pension. As McCord recently noted in the Ervin hearings, he was being paid at an annual rate of $20,000 by the Nixon committee and received another $8000 from the Republican National Committee on top of his pension.

Whether they were simply unable to break the case first time around; whether they were simply politically naive; whether they were manipulated by the White House as were the directors of CIA and the FBI—whatever the truth—the prosecutors should be replaced. That should be one of special prosecutor Cox's first moves.

There is no need to rush the new round of grand jury investigation and indictments. Mr. Cox needs time not only to build up his own staff but also to review the investigative work to date and decide what remains to be done. Of all the inquiries in progress—administrative, legislative and judicial—it is the latter, the criminal justice proceedings, that should be the most carefully prepared. Meanwhile the Ervin committee should take a close look at how justice was administered by the prosecutors who had the case from the beginning.

Progress, Politics, Poverty and Population

Zigzagging China

by Stanley Karnow

Peking

After two weeks in China it is difficult to imagine that this is the same country that was convulsed by Communist Party Chairman Mao Tse-tung's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution only a few years ago. Not only have Mao's exhortations to the Red Guards to unleash furies of radical zeal been replaced by pleas for moderation, pragmatism and common sense, but the young militants themselves have been judged guilty of excesses and shipped off by the millions to rural areas to "remold their consciousness" through hard labor. The past emphasis on ideological purity has faded before appeals stressing the importance of science and technology, and although material incentives are routinely assailed as capitalistic, peasant wages continue to be calibrated to individual performance, and industrial workers have recently been awarded salary increases in order to boost production. Instead of urging youths to destroy feudal vestiges, the authorities are now proudly displaying archeological discoveries and even sending exhibitions of Chinese art treasures abroad. Also gone is the xenophobia of the Cultural Revolution, when left-wing extremists proclaiming themselves to be the heirs of the Boxers stormed foreign legations and even assaulted diplomats. Now, in contrast, the fashion here runs to such conservative guests as David Rockefeller and Juan Péron. Indeed nothing troubles Chinese tourist representatives more than self-styled Western revolutionaries who refuse to ride in chauffeur-driven automobiles and insist upon mingling with the "masses."

An equally significant clue to the changing mood, moreover, has been the return to the limelight of national and provincial leaders who were purged during the Cultural Revolution for allegedly having opposed Mao and supported Liu Shao-chi, the deposed chief of state currently rumored to be dead. The most prominent of those to reappear so far has been Teng Hsiao-ping, formerly the Communist Party secretary general. Denounced in 1967 as Liu's "counter-revolutionary revisionist henchman," Teng dropped out of public sight soon afterward, and, presumably absolved of his sins, he surfaced last month still bearing the title of vice premier. Spotting him at an airport ceremony a couple of weeks ago, I provocatively re-

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called to a Chinese official that Teng had been severely criticized for, among other felonies, his addiction to the bourgeois game of bridge. "There's nothing wrong with playing bridge," the official replied. "In fact I play myself."

Premier Chou En-lai, a man of phenomenal skill and energy, is obviously promoting this new flexibility. But whether it is a long-term or only temporary strategy remains to be seen. It is also a matter of some conjecture whether this more liberal approach will suffice to resolve the tremendous problems that face China.

The biggest of these problems is economic. And nothing dramatizes the economic challenge more than to observe the North China plain, as I did on a trip through Hupeh and Shansi to the Shensi province capital of Sian. Lacking modern irrigation systems and vulnerable to the vagaries of the weather, the countryside is currently ravaged by drought. Rivers are dry and in many places the yellow earth is parched and cracked. Glimpses of human activity further suggest that the region must be poor even in the best of times. People live in caves or mud dwellings, and it is common to see peasants harnessed to carts or relying on primitive plows as they were 1000 years ago.

What this means is that the Chinese leaders are confronted by the prospect that the country may not be able to grow enough food to sustain a population that will certainly exceed a billion within two decades. Even the current statistics are alarming. Total grain output last year, officially estimated at 240 million tons, was about four percent lower than in 1971 and roughly equal to production in 1970. During the past two years however the population has risen by nearly 30 million. That Chou En-lai is aware of the coming crisis is illustrated in his recent forecast, reportedly made to a visiting Scandanavian dignitary, that China must double its production of rice, wheat and other cereals by the end of the century. The key question, of course, is how this can be achieved.

Future Chinese leaders faithful to Maoist principles may choose to go back to frenetic collectivist schemes such as the Great Leap Forward, which was essentially predicated on the notion that an intensive mobilization of labor could spur output. But the Great Leap failed, and the internal tensions generated by its collapse later led to the conflict between Mao and his comrades. As an alternative, future Chinese leaders may choose to turn to heavy technological investments in agriculture. There are already indications that this is being done. The government is expected to spend about one billion dollars this year for the purchase of petrochemical plants from Japan and West Germany. But for a real breakthrough, much more than that needs to be spent. And since they lack capital, the Chinese would have to accept long-term credits and in effect mortgage themselves to foreign suppliers. Either option is unattractive.

The direction taken by China in the years ahead will be charted by the successors to the present leadership generation, which does not have long to live. Here again, however, looms a problem. The Cultural Revolution was in many ways a struggle to determine the political coloration of the successors to the Communist regime's founding fathers. Hardly had the Cultural Revolution ended in 1969 than a fresh struggle for power erupted, this time between Lin Piao and Chou En-lai. Although Lin Piao died in a mysterious airplane crash in Mongolia, or so it is said, an important element in that struggle persists in the Chinese army's reluctance to cede its authority to civilian cadres. The prospect, therefore, is a continuing rivalry for predominance between soldiers and civilians, complicated by ideological differences within each of the groups.

The regime's efforts to dilute the influence of the army are reflected in its vigorous attempts to rebuild such institutions as the Communist Party organization, the trade union federation, the youth league and other associations that were decimated during the Cultural Revolution. This program is apparently being hampered, though, by the fact that many of the civilian officials who were mistreated and humiliated by the Red Guards are hesitant to undertake responsibilities again for fear that the line may shift and they may once more find themselves taunted by the radicals. The decision to reinstate Teng Hsiao-ping was plainly taken in order to reassure these timid officials, and the pressure on them has been eased in other ways as well. For example cadres were formerly given two or three years of labor and indoctrination at so-called May Seventh schools in the countryside in order to reform their outlook. But judging from a showcase cadre school I visited near Peking the other day, all that has changed. The course has been reduced to six months, and the pleasant surroundings at the place are more redolent of a rural retreat than a laundromat for washing brains. Moreover the director of the school seemed to me to be somewhat doubtful about its effects. The curriculum of ideological study, farm work and brief contacts with nearby peasants, he said, could raise the social consciousness of his pupils "a bit." I repeated the phrase "a bit," and he confirmed it with a smile.

One angle from which to view China today is to compare it to China under the Kuomintang. And seen in that perspective, the attainments of the Communists despite their internecine disputes have been extraordinary. But they have not yet shaped a consistent policy. They are still experimenting, and the divergent strategies their different leaders have tried to pursue account for the zigzagging course that they have followed since 1949. Thus their real enemies are not the imperialists or revisionists or leftists or rightists, but the Malthusian magnitudes of China itself.

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Common Cause on the Move

The John Gardner Brigade

by Paul R. Wieck

When John W. Gardner surveys the political landscape from his Common Cause office in downtown Washington, he shakes his head in disbelief—not so much from seeing the wreckage of the Nixon administration as in astonishment that "the system" he vowed to open up when he founded Common Cause four years ago has become so vulnerable to real reform in the wake of Watergate. He counts his assets carefully—215,000 dues-paying members scattered through the 435 congressional districts in this country, enough to finance an operation without going begging to the foundations or corporations; a professional staff building up direct contact with the membership; a growing activism by members at a state and local level.

Gardner's encounter with those forces within "the system" which made Watergate possible led him to launch Common Cause at a time of disillusionment following the ill-fated campaigns of 1968. He had tried working from within, a natural role for a man with his credentials (he spent years at the Carnegie Foundation) in that world of powerful men described loosely as "the Eastern Establishment," a world of money, power, sophistication and, at times, good intentions. Under LBJ, Gardner was in the Cabinet (Health, Education, and Welfare); there, however, his ambitious plans to use his talents to make that accumulation of semiautonomous agencies more responsive to public needs never got off the ground. He couldn't flush out a system clogged by interlocking pressures and counterpressures that back up into every inch of the complex political plumbing. He left in disgust. Gardner then tried the Urban Coalition, only to find the good intentions of his foundation and corporate sponsors often cooled when the rights of city dwellers collided with their own interests. It left Gardner obsessed with a single idea: "Unless you get at the capacity of money to buy political outcomes and at the secrecy which makes it possible, you've missed it all. That's the point at which the system is placed at the disposal of the monied interests."

To accomplish this, he organized a "people's lobby" amid considerable fanfare, an experiment to be funded entirely from dues (215,000 at $15 per year: $3.225 million) and extra contributions of members. Critics were skeptical. What does "opening up the system" mean? Reform of campaign financing? Open meeting laws? Disclosure laws? No, they said, people will tire of sending in $15 a year. They haven't. Even before Watergate hit the living rooms of America, concern "out there" was running deep enough to keep not only Common Cause but a variety of alternatives alive. Each year, Common Cause loses 18 to 20 percent of its members, through deaths, moves, etc.; however, of the remaining 80 to 82 percent, 88 percent renewed last year (it was 72 percent the first year) and enough new members are signed up each year to keep the total inching upward.

After their frustrating assault on the citadels of political power in 1968, the leaders of the "new politics" cast about for new ways of breaching the fortress. Some of these activists took their projects to Common Cause and two of the most fruitful were funded in the formative years—the "voting rights" project headed by Anne Wexler of Connecticut and the Colorado project.

By the summer of 1971, a running and, at times, bitter dialogue was underway at Common Cause over which of two organizational concepts would prevail—a Washington-based "people's lobby" that puts pressure on at the top, or a grass-roots movement to build new coalitions that might come to dominate state and local politics and eventually influence the national scene from below. There wasn't enough money for both.

The Colorado project was the grass-roots prototype. It had charismatic and innovative leadership in Craig Barnes, a gentle but deeply committed young Denver attorney; and David Mixner, who had appeared on the national scene during the Gene McCarthy crusade. Both had visions of a new "populist" uprising. Barnes started with a slashing attack on an $11.3 million rate increase requested by the Public Service Co. of Colorado (PSC). He was able to get the request dismissed the first round because PSC in a display of arrogance had failed to notify its customers of its rate increase request as required by law. PSC came back with a new request but was eventually forced to drop several million on such items as advertising costs, country club dues, etc., from its rate base.

Barnes, suspect in many quarters because he unseated Rep. Byron Rogers (D) in the 1970 congressional primary as an antiwar candidate, found old critics rallying to his cause. Soon, a coalition that embraced the AFL-CIO, farm leaders, environmentalists, peace groups, students and some church groups gathered around Common Cause, and Gardner was telling peo-

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ple you could "see the future of politics in this country" in the coalition being built in Colorado.

By 1972 the Colorado project leaders were ready to embark on a more ambitious project—four initiatives for the fall ballot. The package included complete disclosure for lobbyists, public officials, etc., combined with an open meetings provision, a no-fault insurance proposal, reform of the Public Utilities Commission and comprehensive tax reform. Enough signatures were collected to put all four on the ballot. A heavily financed advertising campaign in the closing days of the campaign beat all but the first.

But Barnes had already lost his argument with Common Cause leaders in Washington, who found their pilot project in Colorado too expensive ($200,000 had been poured into that effort, which also serviced several other states, including Texas). The idea of setting up 10 such pilot projects in carefully selected states was never seriously considered in Washington, where the decision had already been made to stop financing state organizations and build up a Washington-based operation. Common Cause had supported its Colorado project far beyond its initial commitment of $50,000 and it couldn't go both ways.

Jack Conway, Common Cause's president, makes the point that the Colorado situation was unusual—an AFL-CIO leadership with an activist record, strong environmentalist sentiments (a separate group in close touch with Common Cause pushed the successful initiative to ban use of state funds to finance the 1976 winter Olympics), strong and committed local leadership. At the same time, he noted a lack of organization on national issues in the Colorado office and a "tendency to be provincial." Common Cause still has an office in Colorado (like all the others it has to support itself) with one full-time staff member. Barnes left the project because of a health problem, which has since been corrected.

Anne Wexler's voting rights project met a similar fate but for other reasons. Like the Barnes-Mixner group, it attracted some of the brightest young people from the 1968 and 1970 campaigns. It set out to cut away some of the underbrush in election laws by going to the state legislatures and challenging unfair laws in court. It had a good record in getting legislation changed and in overturning restrictive rulings on a state level. It played a key role in the fight for rulings which allowed students in a majority of states to register to vote in the communities in which they attend school. In that fight, a favorable ruling by the California Supreme Court was critical.

Being political activists rather than reformers or lobbyists, the Wexler group wanted to push into new areas of litigation—for example, striking down restrictive laws pertaining to purging of registration roles and making it easier to register. Again, budget was an impediment.

This time, it was Gardner's preoccupation with the power of money to buy political victory and the secrecy that makes it possible that determined the outcome. Wexler and most of her crew quietly left Common Cause as the 1972 primaries approached to sign up with one or another of the presidential campaigns (mostly Muskie).

Common Cause's legal maneuvers have since produced its most publicized gains and some of its lightest moments. It has three cases now pending, including its celebrated action against the Committee for the Re-election of the President (CREEP) to force it to disclose the names of all contributors before April 7, 1972 (the date the new disclosure law went into effect) and also make public its expenditures during that period. Conway explains Common Cause's entry into that fight this way: "It goes back to the Campaign Act of 1971. There were those delays in getting it signed into law. This is when Maurice Stans was taking to the trail to get huge blocks of money. We had disturbing reports of meetings held and the pitch being made that, if they gave before April 7, it would be anonymous." Common Cause's attorneys felt the Corrupt Practices Act covered the situation nicely, and after getting a go-ahead from its litigation committee, filed suit to force disclosure. To avoid a ruling before November 7, CREEP agreed to a stipulation that required it to disclose all contributions and expenditures through March 9 and turn over to the court all records from March 10, 1972, to April 7. Then, the case lingered until March of this year when Stans called Gardner to ask for a private meeting. They're still chuckling at Common Cause over one of the three "ground rules" Stans' attorney requested for the meeting, which was to be held in the office of a Common Cause attorney: guarantee that the office of the Common Cause attorney "won't be bugged."

At the meeting, Stans explained to Gardner he was worried about the "constitutional rights" of the contributors involved. Curious, Gardner inquired about the constitutional rights of those who gave through March 9, whose contributions had already been disclosed. Stans explained they had been called to get permission. All of them, Gardner asked, a bit incredulously? Stans, with a wave of his hand, explained that CREEP had called "all those who gave over $5000 or some such figure." Gardner asked if one had to give $5000 to have constitutional rights. Needless to say, the meeting wasn't a success. To get the rest of the

COMING: the Nixon the young never knew—a retrospective

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lists (incomplete lists had been turned over to the court), Common Cause had to file an action to have Stans declared in contempt of court if he failed to come up with complete lists in 72 hours. While Ken Guido, the Common Cause attorney, was in the courthouse filing the suit, a CREEP attorney arrived with three huge cartons of files.

In addition to the CREEP suit, Common Cause is pressing an action against the clerk of the House and the secretary of the Senate to force them to take action against what is known as "earmarking" of pass-through money. That's a device whereby a special interest gives a congressional campaign committee money earmarked for a certain candidate; however, the contribution is credited on reports as a contribution to the committee, without a notation indicating for whom it is earmarked. Common Cause attorneys insist this violates a provision of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 which says "no person may give in the name of another person." If Common Cause wins this suit, it will root out one of the favorite devices of campaign officials of both parties.

A third suit is against the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for "improper implementation of the dollar check-off." Common Cause claims not only that it was the intention of Congress that the $1 check-off be put on the 1040 income tax form, but has testimony that it was in the original markup of the form. Who changed it? It's not hard to guess, given the Watergate revelations, and Common Cause claims it is "an abuse of their [the IRS's] discretion."

Conway says that Common Cause is "not dependent on the 'new politics' network" for its membership. Some of the harshest criticism has come from activists who don't agree with Gardner's assumption that the "system must be opened up" before a wide-scale attack can be made on such issues as tax reform, redistribution of wealth, the role of the military.

Common Cause still gets support from a lot of activists, from young people, from suburban housewives activated by numerous concerns that have arisen in the last decade—the war, racism, the environment. But it goes beyond these groups. One major source of support comes from what was once considered "good government Protestants." There's a strong group of "independents" in Common Cause, as well as many liberal Republicans and some people who even voted for Nixon.

The membership has been divided by congressional districts. Seven area supervisors, each assigned seven or eight states, are at work establishing contacts with members in each district. They, in turn, contact other members. One of the area supervisors is David Grinnell who explains how he operated when a major vote on one of Common Cause's three legislative issues for this year was coming up—a vote on breaking up the highway trust to make funds available for mass transit (the other two issues are an unequivocal press shield law and "tax equity"). "When the final bill came out," Grinnell says, "what we strove to do was to get our telephone networks activated. We called people in each congressional district to tell them the final vote on the Anderson-Grover amendment was due in two weeks. We asked them to inform their networks to get out letters." Members are asked not to identify themselves with Common Cause when they write.

Perhaps the most effective use of local members by Common Cause came during last fall's campaign when they interviewed most of the congressional candidates on reform of seniority and secrecy practices. By the time the Congress convened, they had the responses of 308 winning House candidates on record, enough to give them real punch in the fight which followed. Common Cause deserves some of the credit for the gains made in that fight at the opening of the session (such as the decision that committee meetings will be open unless a committee votes publicly to close them). They expect to be just as active in future fights for wider financial disclosure, tighter control of lobbyists, public financing of election costs.

A major dividend from efforts to activate local members on key issues (members are polled on which issue they want to push each year) is an upsurge of state and local organizing by Common Cause members.

By the spring of 1973, Common Cause members were well along toward organizing in a dozen or more states. Grinnell finds his local members, particularly in smaller, Western states, "far along the road on state issues. They're looking to the state house." One result of this upsurge of state and local interest will be a coalition building not necessarily under the auspices of Common Cause, but rather a by-product of working with other groups. It won't have quite the result the Colorado project managers hoped for when they dreamed of a "populist" revival at the grass roots. Instead it's apt to produce a network of lobby groups at a state level, pressuring both parties.

The old, good-government approach of making public service "professional" and protecting civil servants from "the unseemly turbulence of politics" is out, Gardner says. Instead, he favors "opening it up, making it acceptable, bringing it back to the people." To Gardner, this is an endless fight: "We have built into our system a continuing battle to keep it responsive. I run into people who have a static conception, who would like to correct the defects of Congress and go into the state legislatures. That's totally at odds with what is involved in this fight. By reforming the seniority system and stripping the chairmen of their powers, you're throwing more power to the caucus. Some years from now, we'll be trying to pry some power away from them. Power is always out of balance. No matter how hard you struggle, the next generation will have to do the same thing."

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

The Mattei Affair

(Paramount)

A Doll's House

(Paramount)

The Day of the Jackal

(Universal)

Francesco Rosi's new film *The Mattei Affair* isn't going to turn the trick for him in this country. Rosi is a director of stunning ability and genuine seriousness, with strong (though not unique) interests: he explores actual events, through fictional re-creation, as social phenomena (like Costa-Gavras and others). His first film seen here was *Salvatore Giuliano*, about the Sicilian bandit: a flawed picture but with a rough, catching fabric, with a purposive feel and a fine graphic sense. Of his later films, not all shown here, the only one I have seen until now is *The Moment of Truth*, made in Spain, a cruel-compassionate study of what bullfighting means as escape-hatch for poor boys. At present he is making a film about Lucky Luciano, and in New York lately, where he came to shoot some scenes for it, he said with a laugh, "Unfortunately not a real gangster picture."

The Mattei Affair is concerned with the forces *under* events: this time the story of Enrico Mattei, the Italian oil executive who died in a plane crash—probably murdered—in 1962. Mattei had prescience about what it's now modish to call the energy crisis, had a clear vision of the importance of oil in politics; and his activities in Italy and abroad ran counter to those of the big oil companies of the world. He was a rationalist, a nationalist and an internationalist, unconcerned with exploitation. His death was a convenience for the exploiters.

It was a natural theme for Rosi and, sheerly in filmmaking terms, he handles it comfortably. But skillfully though it is composed and edited, intelligently though it proceeds, its affective power is weak. We *see* what Mattei is about, we understand his aims, we recognize his enemies; but the heat of his struggle never touches us. The film is deft (but mere) exposition of a problem.

Costa-Gavras, who is comparable, takes a much more externalized subject in *State of Siege* and keeps us gripped with guns and kidnapping; this is a crime story and, not to derogate Costa-Gavras for his choice of subject, he has easier materials to work with than Rosi had. I wish Rosi had succeeded with his subtler social-political drama. I'm afraid he hasn't. But he whets my appetite for the Luciano film.

With *A Doll's House* we are back with questions raised, hardly for the first time, by the recent Soviet film of *Uncle Vanya*. Is there such a thing as a good film of a major play? Allowing for arguable exceptions like *Henry V* and *Pygmalion*, I think the answer is still no. The better the play, the less alterable the form. What we get here are some swatches of Ibsen, scissored apart, with some gussets of transition and transposition inserted, and the whole renovation stitched together again. And, as is the way with film adaptations, although stuff is inserted, the whole altered thing is smaller than the original. This film runs about 90 minutes.

It was made for two reasons: first, the topicality of the theme; second, the success that Claire Bloom, the star, has had as Nora in New York and then London. (Another film is coming with Jane Fonda as Nora.)

As to the first reason, it's dubious. I've already written here (*TNR*, March 13, '71) that I think the play is as much a struggle against 19th-century dramaturgy as against 19th-century marriage, but it does have some size; and that size is reduced by harping on topicality. Others have pointed out, rightly, that *A Doll's House* could have been about either Nora or Torvald; it is really about marriage, not the oppression of women. Indeed, five years after the play was written, the first great writer to discuss it, August Strindberg, argued vigorously that Ibsen had proved the direct opposite of what he intended to prove. (See the preface to *Getting Married*, newly translated by Mary Sandbach and recently published by Viking; $7.95.) Even granting Strindberg's biases, his argument delivers a jolt.

In any event the play still creaks and cranks along, driven through its mechanics only by the great mind that knew all along how it would end.

Claire Bloom proves again that she is a much better actress on screen than on stage: to put it properly, she is good on film and weak on stage. I've seen her in this and several other plays, I've even gone to a solo poetry recital of hers, and never has she had a trace of *command*, let alone of conviction. Her voice and person simply are not able to cope with space. On film, with a compressed environment, with an opportunity to work almost completely for "interiorness," she is truthful and at ease. On film she

(continued on page 33)

Films Worth Seeing

Cabaret. Slick musical, remotely connected with Isherwood's *Berlin Stories.* Michael York better than Liza Minnelli, which is one of the things wrong with the film. But Bob Fosse directs smartly.

The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie. Luis Buñuel, seventy-something and something to marvel at, plays slyly with middle-class corruption.

The Emigrants. Jan Troell photographed and directed, Max von Sydow and Liv Ullmann perform, one of the best chronicle films—about 19th-century Swedes coming to the US.

Last Tango in Paris. A lot of it is adolescently stark and sententious, but the early Brando-Schneider sex scenes are powerful.

Memories of Underdevelopment. Fascinating, sensitive Cuban film about a bourgeois intellectual in the first days of the Castro revolution.

Payday. The last 36 hours in the life of a country-music star, played pungently by Rip Torn. Pleasantly different from some recent pretentiousness, it's more serious than it seems.

State of Siege. Fictional re-creation of the Tupamaro abduction and murder of an American official in Uruguay, 1970. Questionably objective, but generally gripping.

SK

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Crawford Woods on TV

American Pie

A few moist statistics: $23 billion a year is spent on advertising on television; $400 million is directed against children alone. A child sees 220 minutes of plug each week—25,000 commercials a year. To protect us against this barrage, the Federal Trade Commission is given a budget of $5 million, the same amount spent to push Cheerios.

For these figures, I am indebted to a recent CBS News special on commercials; all viewers of the program—and I would assume they were relatively few, the usual fate of public service shows—are indebted to it. They are now reinnoculated against the virus that saps their purses of what one ad exec on the show cunningly called "discretionary income." I'd have looked for William Westmoreland in a peace march before looking to commercial television for a study of television commercials; and even when told there was to be one, I assumed it would be a timid affair. I should have had more faith that the network responsible for "The Selling of the Pentagon" wouldn't turn chicken at a probing of the selling of themselves. They didn't, and the results should stir a storm on the Avenue no smaller than the one the other show brewed in Congress and the army.

Of its many valuable services, perhaps none was greater than the stress laid on the facts that *all* television watchers, however armored with sophistication and infrequent viewing, are preyed on by commercials. No one who sits through these things is wholly free from their claims on his attention—and then on his memory. (Anthropologist Edmund Carpenter: "TV doesn't just wash over us and then go 'out of mind.' It goes . . . deep into mind. The subconscious is a world in which we store everything, not something, and TV extends to the subconscious.")

As Erich Fromm pointed out in an interview that closed the show, commercials are built on human drives that know no exemption: fear, the need to be loved, the desire for an unchanging world. They are efforts at "molding the character of the public" so that "rational, critical, independent thinking is undermined . . . everything becomes a half-fantasy," a "twilight."

This is how it's done: There is a science of advertising hardly less exact than the battery of social sciences it uses—market and motivational research, demographics, even "psychographics." In a place called Preview House, run by something called Audience Studies, Inc., people—my God, where do they *get* these people?—sit docilely through hour after hour of commercials with little machines in their hands to record what they think of various pitches, and sensing monitors taped to their fingertips to record what they feel. Successful campaigns (note the metaphor; admen speak also of testing their products under "battlefield conditions") are rooted in what's discovered here; children are not exempt. In one clip, a kindly, professorial fellow was seen carefully noting the reaction of a gaggle of five-year-olds to a commercial message. What did you like best, Johnny? The music? Real keen. (I know a five-year-old who keeps asking to be taken to Mattel, the toy manufacturer. He thinks it's a town.)

There is even a sort of academy award for commercials, called the Cleo. In fact, a skillful commercial deserves some award; no movie ever made had a budget remotely as high as these things get, and few movies command as heavy a battery of filmmaking talent as the most modest 60-second shuck.

With all this careful work going on before an ad hits the screen, one would think that the results, however offensive, would be at least informative. The FTC has often found otherwise. L-O-F glass once demonstrated its crystal clarity by aiming a camera through a car window with the window rolled down. Hot Wheels (children again; Mattel again) shot a film which implied that these tiny powerless toys are the size and strength of Indy racers. Geritol seemed to offer eternal life through iron, though it provides no more than what's found in a half-chewed spinach stem. Rapid Shave shaved sandpaper, only it wasn't sandpaper. Ocean Spray bragged of its "food energy," and was forced to confess it had been talking about calories. And so on and on.

The FTC and others have suggested a remedy for these offenses that goes beyond simply removing them from the air: counter-commercials, corrective messages carried in the same media at a time that will reach approximately the same audience victimized by the original. CBS showed an example, a warning about the deadly danger of faulty motor mounts in certain Chevrolets. Save here, this warning has never been seen on the air. Small wonder that the six biggest ad agencies in the country refused to be interviewed by CBS News. Admen and network executives who did give interviews probably now wish they hadn't. Without exception, they came across on the screen as charming, accomplished weasels superbly adept at dodging questions and promulgating and protecting their official lies.

This was a superb program. It should be updated and rerun monthly if not more often, and made self-imposed obligatory viewing by all of television's victims. If we can't avoid these importunate voices, we should at least have constant full awareness of the pernicious nonsense that they speak.

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Trouble with the Whoopee Pit

And Then We Moved to Rossenarra

by Richard Condon

(Dial; $7.95)

One has to piece together the Condon life—its details being inseparable from data about bathtubs in Indianapolis and zoning laws in Portugal—but the confusing evidence suggests that he got into writing late (except for an early monograph for *Esquire* on Mickey Finns) via a curious Hollywood route. He had been "chief braggart" for a number of films, then decided one day to leave press agentry, scribble up some scripts and thereby "be fitted for gold toenails"; but when he sat down to his Olivetti he slipped inadvertently into the past tense and so turned novelist.

Maybe some of the extravagance of such tales as *The Manchurian Candidate* and *The Vertical Smile* derives from his Hollywood braggart period, but more likely it goes further back; as he says somewhere in this crazy new book he was perfectly modest until he was six. Anyway you would think that in dealing with dear old reality rather than fiction he would slow down. He is not noveling in the new book—and he is nearer 60 than six—but it makes no difference; he is still a glorious verbal braggart.

What he is doing rather than noveling is providing a leisurely course in the art of emigrating which, he asserts, "is deepseated in all species except the French. With the French there is always something on the stove, and they can't leave it." Condon likes things on the stove too—he ranges from the glories of "Son-of-a-Bitch stew" to a dozen or so kinds of Irish potatoes—but his love of food has not kept him home. Seven countries are on the book's agenda, the last being Ireland where he now lives in a "replica of Blenheim Palace" known as Rossenarra; there he and his wife, like "some two hundred and fifty-six other [emigrant] writers, composers, printers and sculptors" take advantage of the Irish government's respect for art, a respect which relieves them "from the sin of paying Irish income taxes."

Not that it is otherwise cheap in Ireland. Condon went there feeling "nouveau riche on one big film sale" and wanting a swimming pool, walled gardens and a "fun patio" complex with dressing rooms and a "whoopee pit" as well as the grand mansion itself; but the Irish Building Trades proved to be more than a match for his wallet. There was the business of the kitchen for example, which was in the cellar. Could that not be moved upstairs, "perhaps even near the dining room?" And then the boiler for the central heating—it was much too large and it needed more than one kind of fuel, and he never ordered it anyway but it arrived anyway, all rusted, and the Building Trades conned him into accepting it—except that then it wouldn't go in the door. As for the grass, well, his expensive grass won't grow in green Ireland but he has plenty of new road for consolation which "didn't cost any more than putting curbs and a drainage system on the Avenue of the Americas after the subway was finished" and is "a far better road than that upon which Generalissimo Franco brings visiting heads of state who are driven into Madrid from the Barajas Airport."

The expense was (is) one thing, the timing another. With regard to time the English, he observes, "are the Mexicans of Europe and the Irish are the Mayans," and some of the latter are capable of achieving "a speed of *minus* 25.6 miles per hour with an empty wheelbarrow." But he likes both the English and the Irish nonetheless, and even goes so far as to praise English and Irish food—though some of his delight is in nomenclature like "hindle wakes" and "Bedfordshire clanger" rather than the numnums themselves. He is less strong on the French—Paris is the coldest place he's ever lived ("the children couldn't understand why they needed to go to bed fully dressed, then eat their breakfast wheaties with mittens on") and also the most expensive—but he reserves his real animus for the homeland from which he emigrated, especially New York City, a sentiment that warmed this reviewer's heart. It is particularly the American conditioning to violence—on the tube and in life—that sets him off on his serious fulminations against our culture. Right after the assassination of President Kennedy, the movie of *The Manchurian Candidate* was "frozen" because it was about a presidential assassination, hence potentially infectious, and a journalist called Condon to ask him if, because he had written the novel, he felt responsible for Kennedy's death. Condon replied that he "had contributed to form the attitudes of the assassin by being an American, not particularly by writing that novel," and that the novel was largely an attempt "to suggest that for some time all of us in the United States had been brainwashed to violence" but that now the brainwashing tempo was speeding up. Then he really let loose:

> I meant to show that when the attention of a nation is focused on violence that appears without cessation on all the pages of all the newspapers, throughout television programming, in the hundreds of millions of comic books published weekly, in most motion pictures, in the impact of popular music, in popular $7 novels that are soon to become $2.50 paperbacks; when a most violent example is set by city, state and federal governments, when organized crime merges with organized business and industry, when a feeble, hypocritical set of churches do not wish to counteract any of this; and when all of this as it is day and night, is power-hosed at all of us through the most gigantically complex overcommunications system ever developed to entertain folks with color tapes showing their very own sons being killed right there before their eyes each night in a real, old, no-kidding war happening out there somewhere, we must not be surprised that our people bomb little girls in a Sunday school or shoot down the President of our republic, Medgar Evers, Senator Robert Kennedy, Dr. King, Malcom X [*sic*], Governor Wallace and a passel of Black Panthers. We can feign surprise, as we did at the murder of President Kennedy, but we are what we are taught; what we are taught and made to experience (whether vicariously or directly) is our conditioning.

Amen. It is true though that a lesson against brainwashing, which *The Manchurian Candidate* is, can still become part of conditioning *to* violence, especially in the movies where the vividness

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of the violence so easily drowns out the message that This Is Bad. Condon has been one of our smashingly best violence writers and has therefore presumably contributed more—despite his modest denial—than the average citizen's quota to the national violence pool. But as he points out, we are all—we Americans—in need of redemption, which may or may not be achieved by emigration (*The Manchurian Candidate* was written before emigration, right in NYC), but can hardly be delayed by it. Ireland, despite the Building Trades, is a likely place to head for—for serenity, beauty and simple survival, though as he says it takes a heap o' money to make a home there.

Even the table of contents of this volume makes good reading.

Reed Whittemore

Down in the Dumps

Garbage: The History and Future of Garbage in America

by Katie Kelly

(Saturday Review Press; $7.95)

This is a gloriously untidy book about a monumentally messy subject, written with the constant energy and good-humor that all garbage-persons must have to qualify for their calling. You will find very damn few melancholics down in the dumps. It takes a Falstaff, not a Hamlet, to handle the world's trash. Too many mementos mori down there, too many relics of mortality. "What A Dumpp!" said Elizabeth Taylor imitating Bette Davis, and that is about the size of it.

Katie Kelly quotes A. J. Weberman, connoisseur of Other People's Garbage: "*You Are What You Throw Away.*" This is a pallid recycling of "You Are What You Eat," etc., one of those Slogans of the Sixties, but it does have a certain prophetic resonance. If things keep piling up at the rate described by K. K., America will indeed be what it throws away, or rather what it has thrown away up until the last unreturned bottle settles next to the last unrepaired TV set, falling like a fatal keystone into its appointed place in the hitherto random scheme of things. Spell "unrepaired" "irreparable." Spell "No Deposit" "Pint of No Return."

"We will bury you!" threatened Nikita K. Wanna bet? If we Americans have anything to say about it, nobody's gonna bury us but US Americans. There's an American Flag on the Moon Tonight, along with "five television cameras and two lunar rovers . . . eight pair of overshoes and boots, earplugs, hammocks, towels, scientific testing equipment, hammers, helmets, and some twenty-five still cameras." And what have the Russkies got up there? Not much. When it comes to dumping on Diana, nobody can beat us Virgin Landers.

What is Man but the Garbage-Making Animal? Archeologists can detect his former presence by the dumps he has left behind, the fecal matter of an entire culture, the jakes of an era, the dreck of an otherwise unrecorded people, passing between eternities of silence. Before man could write he could pile clamshells in a convenient gully, the reverse image of his hoarding instinct: "Wow, lookit all them clamshells!" Offcastings have always been a mixed matter, regarded with a mingling of distaste and pride:

"I did all *that?*"

Katie Kelly hits precisely the right tone for the nasty job at hand, viz, describing the dimensions of Town Dump, USA. As she puts it, Americans not only make a lot of garbage, they work hard at it, especially in New York City, where Jerome Kretchmer, head of New York City's Environmental Protection Administration and aspiring mayorality candidate, lives. And so does Katie

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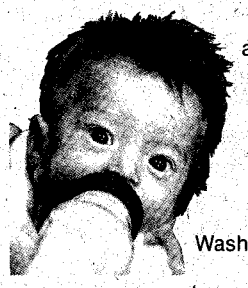

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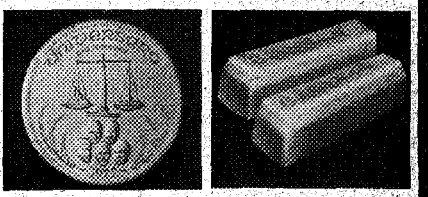

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Kelly, who was born in Albion, Nebraska, but, along with many people and a lot of trash, ended up in Fume City. K. K. has a sorta crush on Jerome K. (Spray paint that in your steenking sobways), and Kretchmer gets a lot of coverage in her book. He's a garbage man, only with style, a canny kind of Kennedy presiding over a Camelot of trash.

New York City makes more garbage than any place in the world, practically all of it the old-fashioned kind, created by human hands. They toss it out of the windows and call it "Air Mail." They toss it out of the windows because they are 1) too lazy, or 2) too scared to go down to the garbage can in the street, if 1) there is a garbage can, if 2) it hasn't already been kicked over by some punk junkie kid, who, when he isn't wasting people (including himself) is trashing garbage, including himself.

Regarding garbage, you see, there is this little lower layer of fetid resentment, festering guilt feelings maybe, about so much being tossed out by so few. Such feelings often explode into garbage fires, especially when garbage men go out on strike, leaving all those guilt feelings piling up to the windows. "Waisters," Melville called the men who work deep in the bowels (the "waist") of a warship, the lowest common denominator in the martial microcosm, tending the bilges. "Dustmen," the English call them, with a certain poetic resonance. Your gravedigger, now, has a calling dignifying him for inclusion in the noblest of tragedies, but not even an Arthur Miller can imagine a proper vehicle for a garbage man, unless it is a dumptruck. And yet, what are Shakespeare's gravediggers but prototypical garbage men, at work in the landfill at Elsinore? Dust Men.

I sing therefore of trash and the man.

Somebody carted away Caesar's dust to the noisome purlieus of the Roman dump, avoided if possible by many a Roman nose. According to Katie Kelly, it was a regular colossus, decorated in its latter days with the decaying remains of lions, tigers and Christians, whose spirits winged their way to heaven as their mortal remains were carted off by the ton. "Pee-yu!" What is a dump but an impromptu salon de refusees? The Garb of an Age?

Truckin' on Down.

The dump I patronize unpatronizingly is another such landfill operation as those Katie Kelly describes at length, a massive sweeping of dirt under a bright green rug. There is some attempt to segregate the offal stuff, but the odds and ends, the unclassified and sordid tailings of the town, trailer- and truckloads of it, end up in a Hole that is gradually becoming a Plateau, a dreary prospect, a monument to mortality from which one can see the nearby watershed that feeds the regional reservoir. Caesar's dust served to stop a bunghole and mine will flow through many a spigot. Between the pure sand and the sky is a week's leavings, awaiting incarceration, a motley pile of yesterday's wealth: engine parts and body parts (put a "b" in "garage," and what do you have?), broken toys, twisted bicycles, scraps of lumber, plasterboard, wire, old lawnhoses and mowers, bits of shattered but indestructible plastic everythings. It's a kind of poem, *la bas*, a *quietus* with a broken bare bodkin, jammed into the torn flesh of an overstuffed, middle-class sofa.

Late in the afternoon a trash man shows up, a salvager, always in a hurry, who backs up his flat-bed truck in a cloud of dust, hops out, darts here and there amongst the junk, pulling out a scrap of this and a hunk of that, anything that's redeemable, from copper wire to corrugated cardboard. Bearing his cross lightly, like your gravedigger, he whistles as he works. He reminds me of those frantic peeps at oceanside, who follow the styrofoam-flecked waves as they recede, then scamper back as the waves break on the beer-can shore, their nervous cries audible above the grating roar of broken glass that the waves draw back, and fling, at their return, up the high strand. It is in the turbid ebb and flow of prosperity that the trashman playeth. Ask not for whom the ocean roars. It roars for thee.

John Seelye

The Poetry of Bob Dylan

Writings and Drawings
by Bob Dylan
(Knopf; $6.95)

This stunning book is practically a full quarto—not quite a 9½ by 12 inches, but so proportioned. The cover is a brilliant waterproof magenta with a full-sized photograph of the poet on the back cover. He is wearing the symbolically torn boots and the proletarian motley, with braided Indian domed hat. He is staring into what appears to be the West.

The publisher is Alfred A. Knopf, probably the most prestigious name in Western printing in our time, after Geoffrey Cumberlege at Oxford, of course. The colophon tells us that the type is Clarendon. "The modern version of this face was designed by Hermann Eidenbenz and was issued by the Haas Type Foundry in Switzerland in 1952. However, the Eidenbenz designs were based on a nineteenth-century English type face of the same name. . . ."

The end-papers reproduce certain draft typescripts of the poet which throw light on his creative process. The deletions and emendations are clear: in one place "no one" is changed to "nobody," and later on "nobody" is changed to "no one." The reader can safely assume that Dylan composes on the typewriter.

Although the title of the volume is *Writings and Drawings*—there are many full-page drawings by the poet in pen and ink or perhaps felt tip—there is a section called "Some Other Kinds of Songs," and then in very small italics "Poems by Bob Dylan." This section seems to be similar to some material called "Joan Baez in Concert, Part 2," followed by the puzzling parenthesis "jacket notes." The poetry here tends toward the autobiographical.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the book is the price. Literary economics, as every poet knows, is a mysterious business. Even a medium-sized novel nowadays may cost $10; but here is a quarto of more than 300 pages, illustrated and sturdily bound, for only $6.95! One can only commend the publisher for this extraordinary display of confidence in poetry. And with the word "poems" so wisely in small italics.

Karl Shapiro

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In Brief

The Eternal Bliss Machine by Marcia Seligson

(Morrow; $7.95)

Marcia Seligson is a mine of fascinating data on the peculiar institution of the American wedding. Her book, with all its funny, gruesome, startling and, in the end, depressing detail, reminds one of Jessica Mitford's superb muckraker on the funeral business. She elaborates upon the highly organized and profitable industry which she calls "the love machinery," including doggedly well-researched details about everything from society bands, catering, White House and Hollywood weddings, the cake business, rental equipment and clothing, honeymoons, to the photography industry and the bridal rental business. She expands upon the differences (not so great that they really matter) among ethnic weddings, and points out the very real differences between the weddings of the Top People and the middle and working classes—"people who don't come from much," as one person described them to her.

There are accounts of odd weddings (at cemeteries, in Las Vegas) and of more usual Jewish Princess affairs ("Connubial Blintz" this chapter is titled, and there are other punny-funny chapter headings, like the one on Texas weddings, called "Deep in the Heart of Excess"). The book ends with a review of the new weddings, symbols of the greening changes in the counterculture, at least in a few places. "Meaningful" is the key word for these new events, goat's milk replaces Jack Daniels at them, the outdoors supplants the Plaza Ballroom, the gift may be a manure spreader as suggested in *The Whole Earth Catalogue*, and the ritual ceremony is likely to contain a Carl Sandburg poem or words from Emma Goldman on the futility of marriage. The participants, the final, heartbreaking horror for their straight parents, may be two males, or two females, marrying each other in public ceremony. Marcia Seligson sees the new wedding as "the budding claim for self, for dignity and autonomy, for alternatives and change." Group marriage, short-term contract marriages: these are all variants on the old form, but still renewals of the age-old wedding ritual for which, Marcia Seligson avows, there is still "an undying hunger."

Sleeping Beauty by Ross MacDonald

(Knopf; $5.95)

One of the stranger mysteries in the chronicle of American letters is the process by which Ross MacDonald, author of the Lew Archer private-eye tales, virtually overnight became the nation's seasonal darling. There he was minding his own business, which was to turn one out every year or so, when suddenly no less a figure than Eudora Welty was making deepthroated music about him on the cover of *The New York Times Book Review;* one of the major newsweeklies gave him the big treatment of cover story plus heavy thinking; other periodicals bestirred themselves to sniff a trend. It wasn't enough to claim that he had bumped Hammett and Chandler from their prominent places in that minor pantheon; the puff-machine wouldn't stop blowing until he had been installed among the masters.

Why this should have happened nearly defies understanding. MacDonald is what he is, and that is no mean thing: a good, sometimes a very good, spinner of private-eye yarns—a skillful-enough plotter and pacer, and a crafty writer when he is getting on with it. When he is not, he gives way to a weakness for phony profundities on man's fate and human motive and destiny, and to a gross appetite for fancy imagery that sometimes hits the mark but far more often hits nothing but a raw nerve.

Archer, the protagonist and narrator, is a singularly unpleasant character, a former Long Beach cop (wicked Southern California is MacDonald's scene) nursing a lifelong pain of a by-now distant divorce, and given to melancholy meditations that couldn't possibly arise from his sensibility; a hard character unaccountably cruel, favoring gratuitous nastiness. The format never changes; a corpse or corpses are stumbled upon; Archer enters the case and rides off in quest of the gnarled roots of the present crime's Gothic past, asking rude questions and getting evasive answers—typically so involved with his images and ruminations that he can't see the plain truth.

Most mystifying in a writer of considerable sophistication is MacDonald's penchant for howlingly improbable pulp-psychology. In his current book the pivotal characters, traumatized in infancy by the horrors those tiny eyes have seen, later command a positive genius for instant recall (or instant repression and regression, as plot requires) all beautifully timed and staged for Archer's convenience. These strain even the permissive conventions of the thriller, where one agrees in advance not to ask embarrassing questions or make exorbitant demands. Yet MacDonald's touts keep talking in exalted terms about the *novel.* If only they would leave his head alone so that he could go on plying his honorable trade.

A Russian Beauty and Other Stories by Vladimir Nabokov

(McGraw-Hill; $7.95)

Jonathan Swift is described as looking over a copy of the "Tale of a Tub" and sighing, "What a genius I had then!" But most artists tend to look at their youthful works with the more jaundiced eye of a skilled craftsman appraising prentice work. Vladimir Nabokov is among these; but he rues his early wares with a difference, as one might expect. He regrets primarily their disappearance into the exile and oblivion of untranslated Russian émigré periodicals.

Happily for his fans, his paternal affection has led him to translate almost all his early works. The present volume collects 13 of the best stories from his and the century's 20s and 30s. Among them are two pieces, "Ultima Thule" and "Solus Rex," which he was later to transmogrify into that complex marvel *Pale Fire,* and a curious piece, "The Circle," that might be called a proletarian view of *The Gift.* The other stories deal especially with art, infidelity and mental aberrations; there is one that should be obligatory for all beginning writers, "Lips to Lips," and . . . as the master might say . . . much, much more. In comparison with his novels these are mere calisthenics, perhaps; but remember the Russian gymnasts before you disparage mere calisthenics.

Notes on Contributors

Crawford Woods, *a free-lance writer, is returning to Washington after a year in New Mexico.* Karl Shapiro's *latest book is a novel entitled* Edsel *(NAL).* Jonathan Yardley *is book editor of the* Greensboro Daily News.

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The Gaudy Place
by Fred Chappell

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $5.95)

This delightful little novel is a series of character studies connected by an unpretentious plot. The setting is a small college town in the mountains of western North Carolina and the characters are from both sides of the tracks. The jailing of a boy from a "good" family—he is the son of a professor—brings the opposing sides together.

Oxie (because strong as an ox) is from the bad side and is a professional bondsman ("We ain't—we can't all be professors"). Spying a way to further improve his position, he approaches the professor about getting his son out of jail. Oxie began on Gimlet Street conning small change from soldiers and small-time truck farmers in bars, pool halls and the like; later he took on a couple of prostitutes, trading them protection from police and bar owners for a cut of the take. Now, however, he has moved out of the Gimlet Street territory, has self-consciously corrected his grammar, bought stylish ("Mod Tout" according to the college professor) clothes, fancy car and living quarters, and acquired a maid.

Among the other characters are Arkie, a 14-year-old coming up in Oxie's footsteps; Clemmie, who maintains she's "not one of your Gimlet Street whores"; the jailed boy himself; and Uncle Zebulon Johns Mackie. Together they entertainingly tell much about small-town life, attitudes, families and politics— though the boy is left in jail.

The Company and the Union
by William Serrin

(Knopf; $7.95)

Karl Marx wouldn't believe a lot of things were he alive today. The idea that capitalists get rich by expropriating the surplus value of labor seems almost quaint in most US industries. Capitalist profits still come out of workers' pockets, but the means are much more devious than Marx imagined. The modern style is not to squeeze down wages but to jack up prices, subsidies and tax breaks, spur demand through advertising and minimize marketplace competition—all the while overlooking such things as public safety, the physical environment and workers' psyches. What makes the new style especially impressive is the support it gets, not verbally but pragmatically, from organized labor.

The nature of that support is explored in this book by William Serrin, a reporter on *The Detroit Free Press* whose beat has included, among other things, the "civilized relationship" between the United Auto Workers union and the managements of the Big Three auto companies. Fans of the UAW, and of Walter Reuther in particular, won't be pleased. Reuther is depicted as an idealistic windbag, vain and isolated from the union's 1.2 million members. The UAW emerges as "a right-of-center union with a left-of-center reputation." Serrin chides the union for failing to push the auto companies into mass transit and low-cost housing programs; for displaying only nominal interest in pollution and industrial safety problems; for neglecting workers' recreational needs; for making no effort to place workers on boards of directors or gain voices for workers in production and management. "For all the UAW's liberalism—for all Reuther's rhetoric—the assembly lines remain plodding, monotonous places," Serrin writes. And he noted with relish-on-wry that when 400 secretarial and janitorial employees of the UAW went on strike in 1971 demanding a $10 weekly raise, union leaders at Solidarity House crossed the picket lines.

Well, nobody's perfect, and while it's currently fashionable in liberal-to-radical circles to fault organized labor for not curing all of society's ills, the fact is that union leaders don't have too many options as long as the main things on workers' minds are higher wages and more time away from the workplace. The unions' very success in these areas has made it hard to push for other changes. Would workers who now have mortgages and other monthly bills embark on lengthy strikes for the sake of, say, auto safety or clean smokestacks? Not likely—and without strikes management is not about to negotiate what it firmly considers to be its own prerogatives.

Fortunately Serrin's book is not primarily an attack on the UAW. It is mostly a detailed and very fascinating account of the way in which labor and management relate to each other in America's dominant industry. Much of the book concerns the 1970 strike against General Motors, a strike Serrin feels was more political than economic, aimed more at winning ratification of contract terms by UAW members than at getting better terms. The posturing, the politicking are vividly unveiled, and Galsworthy couldn't have done it better.

A Second Flowering
by Malcolm Cowley

(Viking; $7.95)

Malcolm Cowley has been writing about the "lost generation" since it was first lost, and this new volume—containing essays on Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Cummings, Wilder, Faulkner, Wolfe and Hart Crane—is inevitably in part a dish of leftovers—but leftovers that will last. The essay on Faulkner, for example—which is Cowley's preface to the Viking *Portable Faulkner* of 1946, lifted intact and added to only slightly—remains the most illuminating critique written about Faulkner. Similarly Cowley on the early Hemingway, though old hat, remains hard to beat—and fortunately he has now added a new essay, "Hemingway the Old Lion," that brings us down to the dark end when Papa's own projected image—which he had "usually succeeded in living up to"—failed him, leaving him with his Jungian "shadow," dogged by sickness and "tormented by demons from the subconscious."

One thinks of Cowley as primarily a critic of fiction, yet two striking essays that were new to this reviewer were those on Cummings and Crane. Cowley knew them both well, and displays an extraordinary talent for making reminiscence illuminate art. Though only 250 pages *A Second Flowering* is definitively meaty, as well as graceful and witty, about a period that for some time lesser critics have been trying to drown in words.

Another Cowley volume, covering a number of earlier American writers as well as Pound, Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, O'Neill and Frost, has just been published in paperback (*A Many-Windowed House*, edited by Henry Dan Piper, Arcturus Paperbacks, Southern Illinois University Press, $2.95).

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Reconsideration

Jack London

Judging by the number of his titles that remain in print, some in editions of quite recent vintage, Jack London is still widely read more than a half-century after his death. His stories and novels of adventure in the Far North have lost none of their vigor, and his depiction of the "dominant primordial beast" in man still touches the American psyche—the Russian psyche as well, since for years he has been as popular in that country as any other American writer.

Martin Eden
by Jack London
Originally published in 1909 by Grosset & Dunlap
Now available in a Macmillan hardback, $5.95, and three paperback editions: Airmont, $.60; Holt, Rinehart & Winston, $2.50; Penguin, $1.85

But if London's reputation rests upon his swashbuckling tales of men and animals battling each other and nature, he was considerably more than a mere storyteller. He was one of the most ardent and controversial Socialists of turn-of-the-century America, whose philosophy was a fascinating and unresolved jumble of Nietzsche and Marx. He was a bitter critic of the American middle and upper classes, yet he cruised the world in an extravagant yacht, the *Snark*, and built himself a $70,000 mansion in California. He wrote about the underside of society in which as a young man he had lived, but his popular success as a writer enabled him to move among the well-situated and powerful.

Nowhere in London's fiction are the complexities and contradictions of his life and mind more intimately revealed than in *Martin Eden*, the most personal of his novels. It is a curious and in some respects unsatisfactory work, but it has all the power of his more popular fiction and a poignancy with which he is not ordinarily associated. It can be read on several levels: as an attempt to locate the sources and purposes of his own writing; as an ambiguous consideration of the "rugged individualism" his stories seem to celebrate; as an attack on the American class system; as a painful account of the price an artist pays for success.

The novel is autobiographical more in spirit than in detail, but there can be no doubt, as London himself conceded, that Martin Eden *is* Jack London. Eden, as the book opens, is a crude, energetic seaman; London worked at sea as a youth and was largely self-educated. Eden's apprenticeship as a writer is long and arduous; so was London's. Eden finally achieves national celebrity in a great burst, with the publication of book upon book; between 1900 and 1904 London published three of his most popular novels and became wealthy. Eden, on the novel's last page, commits suicide; that is an eerie forecast of London's death, by an overdose of morphine, in 1916.

There does not seem, however, to be an immediate parallel in London's life to the crucial event in Martin Eden's: his encounter with Ruth Morse, the daughter of a solidly middle-class Oakland family. As Eden finally learns, she is a timid little prig, but when he first meets her he is struck dumb by her textbook elocution, her seeming brilliance, her ease and grace in the world of money:

> He remembered the hard palms of his mother as she lay in her coffin. And his father had worked to the last fading gasp; the horned growth on his hands must have been half an inch thick when he died. But Her hands were soft, and her mother's hands, and her brothers'. This last came to him as a surprise; it was tremendously indicative of the highness of their caste, of the enormous distance that stretched between her and him.

Eden's adoration of Ruth, his determination to bridge that distance, drives him to improve his speech, his mind, his manners. He begins to read and discovers the power of words, so he begins to write, to put the life he has known on paper. Ruth is dismayed by the ardor with which he pursues the writer's dream; having acknowledged her love for him, she prefers that he enter banking or the law or some similarly adventurous profession. But he

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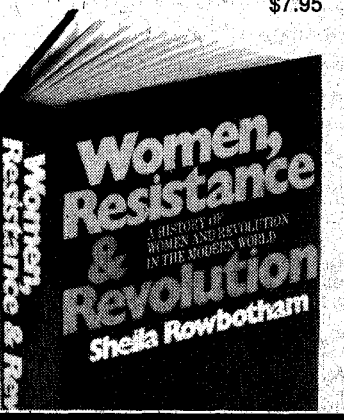

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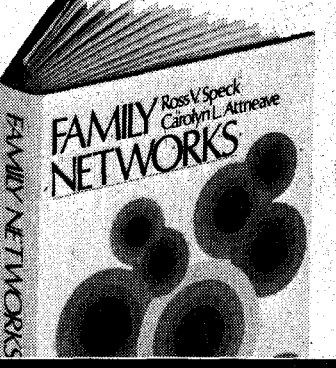

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persists; eventually, when he is mistakenly identified as a leading Socialist, she ends their romance. At last he breaks into print, becomes a literary sensation, and Ruth—hand in hand with others who had scorned him before his success—attempts a rapprochement. Politely but firmly, he rejects her. His spirit has been broken by the discovery that it is for his success, rather than the work that produced it, that he is celebrated and loved. On a voyage to the South Seas, he slips out a porthole and drowns.

If the romance between Eden and Ruth is central to the novel's structure, the modern reader will nonetheless be unpersuaded by it. For one thing, though it takes Eden more than 200 pages to realize that Ruth is a drip, the reader sees through her at once and is puzzled by the attraction she holds for him. For another, the toughness and fire of London's prose collapses into sentimental twaddle when romance arises. The novel succeeds in spite of the romance, rather than because of it.

Martin Eden is about the creative passion—its awakening, its fulfillment and society's inability to comprehend it. Few American novels more powerfully depict the urge to create and the agony of doing so. As London describes Eden slaving away in his dismal lodgings, rejection slips and returned manuscripts piling all around him, he is obviously recalling his own apprenticeship and the vision that enabled him to survive it:

> . . . Martin was glad to sell his early efforts for songs. He knew them for what they were, and it had not taken him long to acquire this knowledge. What he pinned his faith to was his later work. He had striven to be something more than a mere writer of magazine fiction. He had sought to equip himself with the tools of artistry. On the other hand, he had not sacrificed strength. His conscious aim had been to increase his strength by avoiding excess of strength. His work was realism, though he had endeavored to fuse it with the fancies and beauties of imagination. What he sought was an impassioned realism, shot through with human aspiration and faith. What he wanted was life as it was, with all its spirit-groping and soul-reaching left in.

That passage, as much as anything else he wrote, can be taken as London's artistic statement, and it is an accurate one. In the best of his work, whether the adventure tales or the more "literary" novels such as *Martin Eden* and *John Barleycorn*, he does achieve enormous strength—his finest prose vibrates with it—yet he holds it in careful check.

"Strength," however, in London's work has a double meaning. London was drawn to the Nietzschean superman, but he was also infatuated with Marx, and in *Martin Eden* the contradiction is glaring. He said, as Sam S. Baskett notes in a useful introduction to the Holt paperback, that *Martin Eden* was intended as an attack on individualism, that if Eden had joined the Socialists of San Francisco "he would not have died," presumably because he would have subordinated his interior life to the collective will. Yet the novel is nothing so much as a glorification of Eden's individual genius and the ferocity with which—alone and despite the scorn of society—he develops it. London may have had a Socialist moral in mind, but *Martin Eden* is a tale of the creative individual doing battle against all manner of collective restraints.

The portrayal of the middle class is devastating. Behind the facade of gentility and culture, London sees hypocrisy and emptiness. Eden is received in the Morse household with open hospitality and whispered disdain; his efforts to make something of himself on the terms he has chosen are sneered at by Ruth's parents and their affluent friends. At first their table conversation seems to him elevated and erudite, but as he gains command of complex ideas he finds that the Morses cannot discuss them—they are, as a friend tells him, "prattling out little moralities that have been prattled into them, and afraid to live life."

When he becomes a great success those who had scoffed at him are suddenly full of flattery. He is invited to the houses of the wealthy, pampered and

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praised, told that with his first stories "they had immediately picked him for a winner." As he sits at a men's-club banquet, the guest of honor, he thinks:

> My God! and I was hungry and in rags . . . Why didn't you give me a dinner then? Then was the time. It was work performed. If you are feeding me now for work performed, why did you not feed me then when I needed it? . . . No; you're not feeding me now for work performed. You are feeding me now because everybody else is feeding me and because it is an honor to feed me. You are feeding me now because you are herd animals; because you are part of the mob; because the one blind, automatic thought in the mob-mind just now is to feed me. And where does Martin Eden and the work Martin Eden performed come in all of this?

The writer as Celebrity. It is astonishing, in a novel published in 1909, before literary cocktail parties and *Time/Newsweek* cover stories and television talk shows. But even as he was being lionized, Jack London had a fierce spark of integrity that permitted him his *Success* —the ironic title he first gave to *Martin Eden*—and the knowledge that it had nothing to do with "work performed" as an artist.

Jonathan Yardley

Kauffmann, *from page 24*

ooks a bit old for Nora, which she lidn't on stage; but here, insofar as the hredded script permits, she can more learly paint in her substructure: her oncept of Nora as consciously playing er little squirrel tricks, debasing herelf deliberately to play the little Wifeyifey for Torvald, so that when she hanges, we can see her throw off a role ather than suddenly alter character.

Anthony Hopkins bulges forcefully as orvald and cracks credibly. Denholm lliott, who was a fine Judge Brack in *Iedda Gabler* at the Royal Court last ummer, is an equally fine Krogstad ere. Anna Massey is a reedily affecting frs. Linde, and Ralph Richardson deghts as Dr. Rank.

Christopher Hampton made the creenplay from his own reasonably limber stage version. Patrick Garland, like Bloom, gains from the move to film. His direction on stage was like Shubert operetta *rechauffée*. He is much better off with less space to live in, moment by moment, and with enforced control of the audience's eyes.

The film form eats up certain kinds of material from other forms, takes them over completely. The Western, believe it or not, was once a kind of *play;* it never will be again, of course. (I can't remember any play in my time that could remotely be called a Western, in the conventional sense.) The film also seems to be eating up the theater thriller. There used to be lots of thrillers on Broadway; in recent years, two—*Sleuth* and *Child's Play*. Will the film also eat up the thriller novel?

Many are still published, and some are big hits, like Frederick Forsyth's *The Day of the Jackal*. Despite their success, I still don't understand why one would want to *read* a thriller that one knows is going to be a film, even if it means waiting a year or so. Why bother to *read* those descriptions of cars, guns, planes, pursuits, girls' bodies, etc? Prose is now too precious for that sort of sight-substitute. Film can do it swifter and better. The process of reading has, contrary to symposium fears, been elevated by film, I think. The entertainment branch of fiction is now outmoded by the entertainment branch of film; and prose fiction can concentrate on the upper realms that are unique to its powers.

Having said that, I must contradictorily report that the film of *The Day of the Jackal* is dull. I read about half the novel before the bother of reading it outweighed the excitement. But at least I could see the well-greased mechanisms working. In the film I see them again, except they don't work very well.

The chief trouble is the director, Fred Zinnemann, a competent man *(The Nun's Story)* who just doesn't seem to *relish* this job. Without such relish, this sort of picture is nothing. Before *Jackal* is five minutes old, you know it's just going to be told professionally, with no flavor and no zest. I am no Hitchcock helot, but I certainly wish he had been in charge—if only to make me queasy with his cleverness. Take for instance a scene in which a maid brings up a breakfast tray to the boudoir of the lady of a chateau. We know the lady has been murdered. Hitchcock would have figured that, since we already know about the death, the effect of the sequence must come from the discovery by those who don't know; so he must devise some way to let us enjoy our superior knowledge. (There are comparable moments in *Frenzy* and *The Birds.)* Zinnemann completely flubs it, using neither confrontation nor implication but a muddle of both. The lack of tension is doubly damaging in a thriller about the assassination of Charles de Gaulle because, if you don't mind my tipping the end, de Gaulle was not assassinated.

Edward Fox, brother of the James Fox who was so good in *The Servant*, is breezily mad as the hired killer. The rest of the cast are all right except for the cloying Alan Badel as a cabinet minister and the lovely Cyril Cusack as an Italian—*Italian!*—gunsmith.

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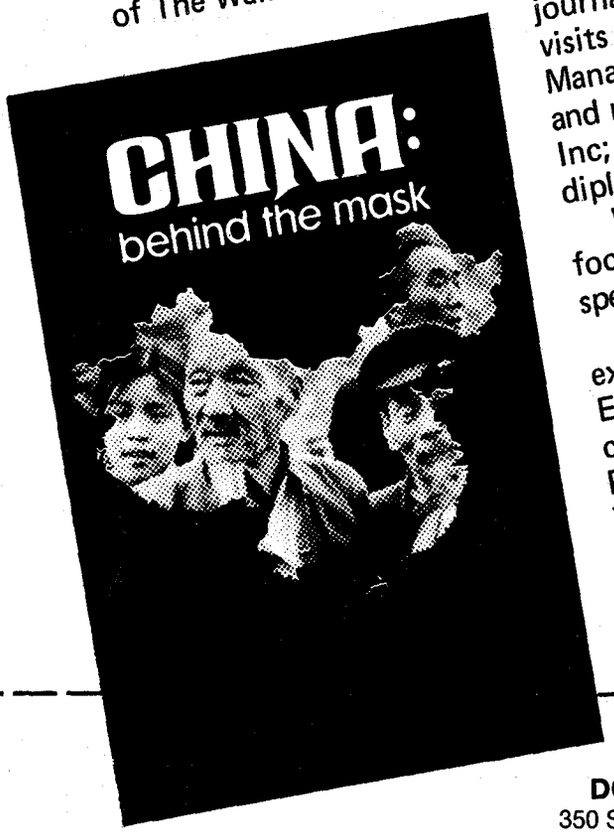

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